

BRITISH THEATRE

BELL's

BRITISH THEATRE.



VOL XIX.

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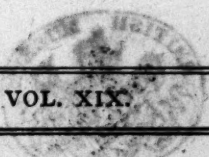


BELL's
BRITISH THEATRE.

CONSISTING OF

THE MOST ESTEEMED

ENGLISH PLAYS.



VOL. XIX.

CONTAINING

MOURNING BRIDE, ... BY CONGREVE.

ORONOKO, ... — SOUTHERN.

WEST INDIAN, ... — CUMBERLAND.

KING CHARLES I. — HAVARD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR, AND UNDER THE DIRECTION OF,
GEORGE CAWTHORN, BRITISH LIBRARY, STRAND.

1797.

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MOURNING WEAR. BY CONGRAT.
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GEORGE CANTON, BRITISH LIBRARY, STRAND.

7 JU 52

Act I.

MOORING BRIDE.



D. W. & Co. del. & sculp.

Thornhill sculp.

MR. POPE as ZARA.

— but when I feel
These bonds, I look with loathing on myself.

London: Printed by J. B. & Co. in the Strand, near St. Dunstons Church.



Hamilton pins?

London Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand, April 20, 1791.

Heath sculp.

7 JU 52

THE
MOURNING BRIDE.

A
TRAGEDY.

BY MR. CONGREVE.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
**THEATRES-ROYAL
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.**

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,
By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by Inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

LONDON :

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of
JOHN BELL, British-Library, STRAND,
Bookseller to His Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

M DCC XCI.



TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS,
THE PRINCESS.

MADAM,

THAT high station, which, by your birth, you hold above the people, exacts from every one, as a duty, whatever honours they are capable of paying to your Royal Highness; but that more exalted place to which your virtues have raised you, above the rest of princes, makes the tribute of our admiration and praise rather a choice, more immediately preventing that duty. The public gratitude is ever founded on a public benefit; and what is universally blessed is always an universal blessing. Thus, from yourself we derive the offerings which we bring; and that incense which arises to your name, only returns to its original, and but naturally requires the parent of its being.

From hence it is, that this Poem, constituted on a moral, whose end it is to recommend, and to encourage virtue, of consequence, has recourse to your Royal Highness's patronage; aspiring to cast itself beneath your feet, and declining approbation, 'till you shall condescend to own it, and vouchsafe to shine upon it, as on a creature of your influence.

It is from the example of princes, that virtue becomes a fashion in the people; for even they who are averse to instruction, will yet be fond of imitation.

But there are multitudes who never can have means nor opportunities of so near an access, as to partake of the benefit of such examples. And, to these, Tragedy, which distinguishes itself from the vulgar Poetry by the dignity of its characters, may be of use and information. For they who are at that distance from original greatness, as to be deprived of the happiness of contemplating the perfections, and real excellencies of your Royal Highness's person in your court, may yet behold some small sketches and imagings of the virtues of your mind, abstracted, and represented on the Theatre.

Thus Poets are instructed, and instruct; not alone by precepts which persuade, but also by examples which illustrate. Thus is delight interwoven with instruction; when not only virtue is prescribed, but also represented.

But if we are delighted with the liveliness of a feigned representation of great and good persons and their actions, how must we be charmed with beholding the persons themselves? If one or two excelling qualities, barely touched in the single action, and small compass, of a Play, can warm an audience with a concern and regard even for the seeming success and

prosperity of the actor, with what zeal must the hearts of all be filled for the continued and encreasing happiness of those who are the true and living instances of elevated and persisting virtue? Even the vicious themselves must have a secret veneration for those peculiar graces and endowments which are daily so eminently conspicuous in your Royal Highness; and, though repining, feel a pleasure, which, in spite of envy, they per-force approve.

If, in this Piece, humbly offered to your Royal Highness, there shall appear the resemblance of any of those many excellencies which you so promiscuously possess, to be drawn so as to merit your least approbation, it has the end and accomplishment of its design. And however imperfect it may be, in the whole, through the inexperience or incapacity of the author; yet if there is so much as to convince your Royal Highness, that a Play may be, with industry so disposed (in spite of the licentious practice of the modern Theatre) as to become sometimes an innocent, and not unprofitable entertainment; it will abundantly gratify the ambition, and recompense the endeavours of

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient, and

Most humbly devoted Servant,

WILLIAM CONGREVE.

THE MOURNING BRIDE.

THIS splendid error of a man of genius has been popular among such as either knew not, or did not feel, the chaster ornaments of composition—but gave to extravagance of sentiment and improbability of situation what is due only to propriety and nature.

As the language and the sentiments of this tragedy exemplify very forcibly every fault in dramatic composition, it may not be disserviceable to Letters to extend the brevity of our mentions for this article.

CONGREVE's imagination was naturally vivid, luxuriant, and rapid.—He heaps up, when the *impetus* is upon him, an accumulation of glitter and gawd, extravagant and mistimed.—For passion his common substitute is splendor; yet so unequal are his powers, that he has frequently scenes of alternate inanity and bombast—of creeping imbecility and soaring extravagance.

OF his use of unmeaning *expletive*, take the following sample:—

Almeria. But I *did* promise I would tell thee—What?
My miseries? Thou *dost* already know them;

And, when I told thee thou *didst* nothing know,
It was because thou *didst* not know Alphonso.

Surely this is NOTHING.

Of the *inane* take the following delectable dose :

Osmyn. I hate her not, nor can dissemble love—
But as I may, I'll do.

This reminds us of Corporal *Nym* and ancient *Pistol*—
one of which tatterdemalions says—

I cannot tell,
Things must be *as they may*.

Of *miserable* extravagance, and misplaced metaphor,
read this rant :

Osmyn. What brightness breaks upon me thus thro' shades,
And promises a day to this dark dwelling ?

A Prince imprisoned is not thus superlative in expression.—Observe also the lady is veiled.

The grand model for tender intercourse, the exact etiquette of dress, and colloquial communicativeness, here follows, extracted from a scene between Almeria and Leonora :

Leon. Husband ! O Heav'ns !

Alm. Alas ! what have I said ?

My grief has hurried me beyond all thought.

I would have kept that secret ; though I know

Thy love and faith to me deserve all confidence.

The reason why she would conceal it, is extremely curious.

But 'tis the wretch's comfort still to have
Some small reserve of *near* and inward woe,
Some unsuspected hoard of darling grief,
Which *THEY* (who are *they*?) unseen may wail, and weep,
 and mourn,
And, glutton-like, *alone* devour.

Leon. Indeed!

I knew not this.

Alm. O no, thou know'st not *half*,

Know'st *nothing* of my sorrows—if thou did'st—

If I should tell thee, wouldst thou pity me?

Tell me: I know thou wouldst, thou art compassionate.

Leon. Witness these tears—

Alm. I thank thee, &c.

But it is necessary we should remark, *ALL* is not like these *notitia*—the Play has sentiments, now and then, that are natural, and description that both Feeling and Fancy may delight in—but it excites no interest—the personages are out of *drawing*—the modest outline of nature is bloated by extravagance, and ornamented by an injudicious fancy with jewels that glitter only in the sooty ear of an *Ethiop*.

PROLOGUE.

*THE time has been when plays were not so plenty,
And a less number, new, would well content ye.
New plays did then like almanacks appear,
And one was thought sufficient for a year :
Though they are more like almanacks of late ;
For in one year, I think, they're out of date.
Nor were they, without reason, join'd together ;
For just as one prognosticates the weather,
How plentiful the crop, or scarce the grain,
What peals of thunder, or what showers of rain ;
So t' other can foretel, by certain rules,
What crops of coxcombs, or what floods of fools.
In such like prophecies were poets skill'd,
Which now they find in their own tribe fulfill'd.
The dearth of wit they did so long presage,
Is fallen on us, and almost starves the stage.
Were you not griev'd, as often as you saw
Poor actors thresh such empty sheafs of straw ?
Toiling and lab'ring at their lungs' expence,
To start a jest, or force a little sense ?
Hard fate for us, still harder in th' event :
Our authors sin, but we alone repent.
Still they proceed, and, at our charge, write worse ;
'Twere some amends, if they could reimburse ;*

*But there's the devil, tho' their cause is lost,
There's no recovering damages or cost.
Good wits, forgive this liberty we take,
Since custom gives the losers leave to speak.
But if, provok'd, your dreadful wrath remains,
Take your revenge upon the coming scenes:
For that damn'd poet's spar'd, who damns a brother,
As one thief 'scapes that executes another.
Thus far alone does to the wits relate;
But from the rest we hope a better fate.
To please, and move, has been our poet's theme,
Art may direct, but nature is his aim;
And nature miss'd, in vain he boasts his art,
For only nature can affect the heart.
Then freely judge the scenes that shall ensue;
But as with freedom, judge with candour too.
He would not lose, thro' prejudice his cause;
Nor would obtain, precariously, applause.
Impartial censure he requests from all,
Prepar'd by just decrees to stand or fall,*

Dramatis Personae.

DRURY - LANE.

Men.

MANUEL, <i>the king of Granada</i>	-	Mr. Aickin.
GONSALEZ, <i>his favourite</i>	-	Mr. Packer.
GARCIA, <i>son to Gonsalez</i>	-	Mr. Barrymore.
PEREZ, <i>captain of the guards</i>	-	Mr. Wilson.
ALONZO, <i>an officer, creature to Gonsalez</i>	-	Mr. Phillimore.
OSMYN, <i>a noble prisoner</i>	-	Mr. Kemble.
HELI, <i>a prisoner, his friend</i>	-	Mr. Benson.
SELIM, <i>an eunuch,</i>	- -	Mr. Fawcett.

Women.

ALMERIA, <i>the princess of Granada</i>	Mrs. Ward.
ZARA, <i>a captive queen</i>	- - Mrs. Siddons.
LEONORA, <i>chief attendant on the princess</i>	Miss Tidswell.

COVENT - GARDEN.

Men.

MANUEL, <i>the king of Granada</i>	-	Mr. Hull.
GONSALEZ, <i>his favourite</i>	-	Mr. Gardner.
GARCIA, <i>son to Gonsalez</i>	-	Mr. Powell.
PEREZ, <i>captain of the guards</i>	-	Mr. Thompson.
ALONZO, <i>an officer, creature to Gonsalez</i>	-	Mr. Fearon.
OSMYN, <i>a noble prisoner</i>	-	Mr. Holman.
HELI, <i>a prisoner, his friend</i>	-	Mr. Cubit.
SELIM, <i>an eunuch</i>	- -	Mr. Macready.

Women.

ALMERIA, <i>the princess of Granada</i>	Miss Brunton.
ZARA, <i>a captive queen</i>	- - Mrs. Pope.
LEONORA, <i>chief attendant on the princess</i>	Mrs. Platt.

Women, eunuchs, and mutes attending Zara, guards, &c.

SCENE, Granada.



THE
MOURNING BRIDE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A room of state. The curtain rising slowly to soft music, discovers ALMERIA in mourning, LEONORA waiting in mourning.

After the music, ALMERIA rises from her chair, and comes forward.

Almeria.

MUSIC has charms to sooth a savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.
I've read, that things inanimate have mov'd,
And, as with living souls, have been inform'd
By magic numbers and persuasive sound.
What then am I? Am I more senseless grown
Than trees or flint? O; force of constant woe!
'Tis not in harmony to calm my griefs.
Anselmo sleeps, and is at peace; last night
The silent tomb receiv'd the good old king;
He and his sorrows now are safely lodg'd
Within its cold, but hospitable, bosom.
Why am not I at peace?

Leon. Dear Madam, cease,
Or moderate your grief; there is no cause—

C

Alm. No cause! Peace, peace; there is eternal cause,
And misery eternal will succeed.

Thou canst not tell—thou hast indeed no cause.

Leon. Believe me, Madam, I lament Anselmo,
And always did compassionate his fortune; 20
Have often wept, to see how cruelly
Your father kept in chains his fellow-king:
And oft, at night, when all have been retir'd,
Have stol'n from bed, and to his prison crept;
Where, while his gaoler slept, I thro' the grate
Have softly whisper'd, and enquir'd his health;
Sent in my sighs and pray'rs for his deliv'rance;
For sighs and pray'rs were all that I could offer.

Alm. Indeed thou hast a soft and gentle nature;
That thus could melt to see a stranger's wrongs.
Oh, Leonora, hadst thou known Anselmo
How wou'd thy heart have bled to see his sufferings!
Thou hadst no cause, but general compassion.

Leon. Love of my royal mistress gave me cause;
My love of you begot my grief for him;
For I had heard, that when the chance of war
Had bless'd Anselmo's arms with victory,
And the rich spoil of all the field, and you,
The glory of the whole, were made the prey
Of his success; "that then, in spite of hate, 40
"Revenge, and that hereditary feud
"Between Valentia's and Granada's kings,"
He did endear himself to your affection,
By all the worthy and indulgent ways
His most industrious goodness could invent;

Proposing, by a match between Alphonso
His son, the brave Valentian prince, and you,
To end the long dissention, and unite
The jarring crowns.

"*Alm.* Alphonso! O, Alphonso!

"Thou too art quiet—long hast been at peace—

"Both, both—father and son are now no more.

"Then why am I? Oh, when shall I have rest?

"Why do I live to say you are no more?

"Why are all these things thus?—Is it of force?

"Is there necessity I must be miserable?

"Is it of moment to the peace of Heav'n,

"That I should be afflicted thus?—If not,

"Why is it thus contriv'd? Why are things laid

"By some unseen hand, so, as of sure consequence,

"They must to me bring curses, grief of heart,

"The last distress of life, and sure despair? 62

"*Leon.* Alas! you search too far, and think too
deeply."

Alm. Why was I carried to Anselmo's court?

Or there, why was I us'd so tenderly?

Why not ill-treated, like an enemy?

For so my father would have us'd his child.

Oh, Alphonso, Alphonso!

Devouring seas have wash'd thee from my sight.

No time shall raze thee from my memory;

No, I will live to be thy monument:

The cruel ocean is no more thy tomb:

But in my heart thou art interr'd; there, there,

Thy dear resemblance is for ever fix'd ;
My love, my lord, my husband still, tho' lost.

Leon. Husband ! Oh, Heav'ns !

Alm. Alas ! what have I said ?

My grief has hurry'd me beyond all thought.
I would have kept that secret ; though I know
Thy love, and faith to me deserve all confidence. 80
" But 'tis the wretch's comfort still to have
" Some small reserve of near and inward woe,
" Some unsuspected hoard of darling grief,
" Which they unseen may wail, and weep, and mourn,
" And, glutton-like, alone devour.

Leon. Indeed,

" I knew not this.

" *Alm.* Oh, no, thou know'st not half,

" Know'st nothing of my sorrows—if thou didst—

" If I should tell thee, would'st thou pity me ?

" Tell me ; I know thou would'st ; thou art com-
passionate."

Leon. Witness these tears——

" *Alm.* I thank thee, Leonora——

" Indeed I do, for pitying thy sad mistress :

" For 'tis, alas ! the poor prerogative

" Of greatness to be wretched, and unpitied——

" But I did promise I would tell thee—What ?

" My miseries ! Thou dost already know 'em :

" And when I told thee thou didst nothing know,

" It was because thou didst not know Alphonso : 100

" For to have known my loss, thou must have known

" His worth, his truth, and tenderness of love."

Leon. The memory of that brave prince stands
fair

In all report—

And I have heard imperfectly his loss;
But, fearful to renew your troubles past,
I never did presume to ask the story.

Alm. If for my swelling heart I can, I'll tell thee.
I was a welcome captive in Valentia,
E'en on the day when Manuel, my father,
Led on his conqu'ring troops high as the gates
Of king Anselmo's palace; which, in rage,
And heat of war, and dire revenge, he fir'd.
The good king, flying to avoid the flames,
Started amidst his foes, and made captivity
His fatal refuge—Would that I had fall'n
Amidst those flames—but 'twas not so decreed.
Alphonso, who foresaw my father's cruelty,
Had borne the queen and me on board a ship
Ready to sail; and when this news was brought 120
We put to sea; but being betray'd by some
Who knew our flight, we closely were pursu'd,
And almost taken; when a sudden storm
Drove us, and those that follow'd, on the coast
Of Afric: There our vessel struck the shore
And bulging 'gainst a rock, was dash'd in pieces;
But Heav'n spar'd me for yet much more affliction!
Conducting them who follow'd us, to shun
The shore, and save me floating on the waves,
While the good queen and my Alphonso perish'd.
Leon. Alas! were you then wedded to Alphonso?

Alm. That day, that fatal day, our hands were join'd.
 For when my lord beheld the ship pursuing,
 And saw her rate so far exceeding ours,
 He came to me, and begg'd me by my love,
 I would consent the priest should make us one;
 That whether death or victory ensu'd
 I might be his, beyond the power of fate;
 The queen too did assist his suit—I granted;
 And in one day was wedded and a widow. 140

Leon. Indeed 'twas mournful—

Alm. 'Twas as I have told thee—

For which I mourn, and will for ever mourn;
 Nor will I change these black and dismal robes,
 Or ever dry these swoln and watery eyes;
 Or ever taste content, or peace of heart,
 While I have life, and thought of my Alphonso.

“*Leon.* Look down, good Heav'n, with pity on her sorrows,

“And grant that time may bring her some relief.

“*Alm.* Oh, no! time gives increase to my afflictions.

“The circling hours, that gather all the woes

“Which are diffus'd thro' the revolving year,

“Come heavy laden with th' oppressing weight

“To me; with me, successively, they leave

“The sighs, the tears, the groans, the restless cares,

“And all the damps of grief, that did retard their flight:

“They shake their downy wings, and scatter all

“The dire collected dews on my poor head:

“Then fly with joy and swiftness from me.”

[Shouts at a distance,

Leon. Hark!

160

The distant shouts proclaim your father's triumph.
O cease, for Heaven's sake, assuage a little
This torrent of your grief, for, this I fear,
'Twill urge his wrath, to see you drown'd in tears,
When joy appears in every other face.

Alm. And joy he brings to ev'ry other heart,
But double, double weight of woe to mine :
For with him Garcia comes—Garcia, to whom
I must be sacrific'd, and all the vows
I gave my dear Alphonso basely broken.
No, it shall never be ; for I will die
First, die ten thousand deaths—Look down, look
down,

Alphonso, hear the sacred vow I make ; *[Kneels.*

“ One moment, cease to gaze on perfect bliss,
“ And bend thy glorious eyes to earth and me.”

And thou, Anselmo, if yet thou art arriv'd
Thro' all impediments of purging fire,
To that bright Heav'n, where my Alphonso reigns,
Behold thou also, and attend my vow.

If ever I do yield, or give consent, 180

By any action, word, or thought, to wed
Another lord ; may then just Heav'n show'r down
Unheard of curses on me, greater far

(If such there be in angry Heaven's vengeance)

Than any I have yet endur'd—And now *[Rising.*

My heart has some relief ; having so well
Discharg'd this debt, incumbent on my love.

Yet, one thing more I wou'd engage from thee.

Leon. My heart, my life, and will, are only yours.

Alm. I thank thee. 'Tis but this: anon, when all
Are wrapp'd and busied in the general joy,
Thou wilt withdraw, and privately with me
Steal forth, to visit good Anselmo's tomb.

Leon. Alas! I fear some fatal resolution.

Alm. No, on my life, my faith, I mean no ill,
Nor violence—I feel myself more light,
And more at large, since I have made this vow.
Perhaps I would repeat it there more solemnly.
'Tis that, or some such melancholy thought,
Upon my word, no more.

200

Leon. I will attend you.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. The lord Gonsalez comes to tell your high-
ness

The king is just arriv'd.

Alm. Conduct him in.

[*Exit Alon.*

That's his pretence; his errand is, I know,
To fill my ears with Garcia's valiant deeds;
And gild and magnify his son's exploits.
But I am arm'd with ice around my heart,
Not to be warm'd with words, or idle eloquence.

Enter GONSALEZ.

Gon. Be ev'ry day of your long life like this.
The sun, bright conquest, and your brighter eyes,
Have all conspir'd to blaze promiscuous light,
And bless this day with most unequal'd lustre.

Your royal father, my victorious lord,
 Loaden with spoils, and ever-living laurel,
 Is ent'ring now, in martial pomp, the palace.
 Five hundred mules precede his solemn march,
 Which groan beneath the weight of Moorish wealth.
 Chariots of war, adorn'd with glitt'ring gems,
 Succeed ; and next, a hundred neighing steeds, 220
 White as the fleecy rain on Alpine hills,
 That bound and foam, and champ the golden bit,
 As they disdain'd the victory they grace.
 Prisoners of war in shining fetters follow :
 And captains of the noblest blood of Afric
 Sweat by his chariot wheel, " and lick and grind,
 " With gnashing teeth, the dust his triumphs raise."
 The swarming populace spread every wall,
 " And cling, as if with claws they did enforce
 " Their hold ; thro' clifted stones stretching and
 " staring,
 " As if they were all eyes, and every limb
 " Would feed its faculty of admiration :"
 While you alone retire, and shun this sight ;
 This sight, which is indeed not seen (tho' twice
 The multitude should gaze) in absence of your eyes.
Alm. My lord, my eyes ungratefully behold
 The gilded trophies of exterior honours.
 Nor will my ears be charm'd with sounding words,
 Or pompous phrase, the pageantry of souls.
 But that my father is return'd in safety, 240
 I bend to Heav'n with thanks.

Gon. Excellent princess !

D

But 'tis a task unfit for my weak age
 With dying words to offer at your praise.
 Garcia, my son, your beauty's lowest slave,
 Has better done ; in proving with his sword
 The force and influence of your matchless charms.

Alm. I doubt not of the worth of Garcia's deeds,
 Which had been brave, though I had ne'er been born.

Leon. Madam, the king. [Flourish.

" *Alm.* My women. I wou'd meet him."

[Attendants to Almeria enter in mourning.

Symphony of warlike music. Enter the KING, attended by GARCIA and several officers. Files of prisoners in chains, and guards, who are ranged in order round the stage. ALMERIA meets the KING, and kneels: afterwards GONSALEZ kneels and kisses the KING's hand, while GARCIA does the same to the princess.

King. Almeria, rise—My best Gonzalez, rise.
 What, tears! my good old friend—

Gon. But tears of joy.
 Believe me, Sir, to see you thus, has fill'd
 Mine eyes with more delight than they can hold.

King. By Heav'n, thou lov'st me, and I'm pleas'd
 thou dost ;

Take it for thanks, old man, that I rejoice
 To see thee weep on this occasion—Some
 Here are, who seem to mourn at our success! 260
 Why is't, Almeria, that you meet our eyes,
 Upon this solemn day, in these sad weeds?
 In opposition to my brightness, you

And yours are all like daughters of affliction.

Alm. Forgive me, Sir, if I in this offend.

The year, which I have vow'd to pay to Heav'n,
In mourning and strict life, for my deliv'rance
From wreck and death, wants yet to be expir'd.

King. Your zeal to Heav'n is great, so is your debt:
Yet something too is due to me, who gave
That life, which Heav'n preserv'd. A day bestow'd
In filial duty, had atton'd and given
A dispensation to your vow—No more!
'Twas weak and wilful—and a woman's error.
Yet, upon thought, it doubly wounds my sight,
To see that sable worn upon the day,
Succeeding that, in which our deadliest foe,
Hated Anselmo, was interr'd—By Heav'n,
It looks as thou didst mourn for him: just so
Thy senseless vow appear'd to bear its date, 280
Not from that hour wherein thou wert preserv'd,
But that wherein the curs'd Alphonso perish'd.
Ha! What? thou dost not weep to think of that!

Gon. Have patience, royal Sir; the princess weeps
To have offended you. If fate decreed,
One pointed hour should be Alphonso's loss,
And her deliverance, is she to blame?

King. I tell thee she's to blame, not to have feasted
When my first foe was laid in earth, such enmity,
Such detestation bears my blood to his;
My daughter should have revell'd at his death,
She should have made these palace walls to shake,
And all this high and ample roof to ring

With her rejoicings. What, to mourn and weep!
Then, then to weep, and pray, and grieve! by
Heav'n,

There's not a slave, a shackled slave of mine,
But should have smil'd that hour, through all his
care,

And shook his chains in transport and rude harmony.

Gon. What she has done, was in excess of goodness;
Betray'd by too much piety, to seem 300
As if she had offended.—Sure, no more.

King. To seem is to commit, at this conjuncture.
I wo't have a seeming sorrow seen
To-day.—Retire; divest yourself with speed
Of that offensive black; on me be all
The violation of your vow; for you
It shall be your excuse, that I command it.

Gar. [*Kneeling.*] Your pardon, Sir, if I presume so
far,

As to remind you of your gracious promise.

King. Rise, Garcia—I forgot. Yet stay, Almeria.

Alm. My boding heart!—What is your pleasure,
Sir?

King. Draw near, and give your hand, and, Gar-
cia, yours:

Receive this lord, as one whom I have found
Worthy to be your husband, and my son.

Gar. Thus let me kneel to take—O not to take—
But to devote, and yield myself for ever
The slave and creature of my royal mistress.

Gon. O let me prostrate pay my worthless thanks—

King. No more ; my promise long since pass'd, thy services,

And Garcia's well-try'd valour, all oblige me. 320

This day we triumph ; but to-morrow's sun,

Garcia, shall shine to grace thy nuptials——

Alm. Oh !

[*Faints.*

Gar. She faints ! help to support her.

" *Gon.* She recovers."

King. " A fit of bridal fear." How is't, Almeria ?

Alm. A sudden chillness seizes on my spirits.

Your leave, Sir, to retire.

King. Garcia, conduct her.

[*Garcia leads Almeria to the door, and returns.*

This idle vow hangs on her woman's fears,

" I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,

" And make it sin, not to renounce that vow

" Which I'd have broken." Now, what would

Alonzo ?

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. Your beauteous captive, Zara, is arriv'd,
And with a train as if she still were wife

To Albucacim, and the Moor had conquer'd.

King. It is our will she should be so attended.

" Bear hence these prisoners." Garcia, which is he,
Of whose mute valour you relate such wonders?

[*Prisoners led off.*

Gar. Osmyn, who led the Moorish horse ; but he,
Great Sir, at her request, attends on Zara. 341

King. He is your prisoner ; as you please dispose him.

Gar. I would oblige him, but he shuns my kindness ;

And with a haughty mien, and stern civility,
Dumbly declines all offers. If he speak,
'Tis scarce above a word ; as he were born
Alone to do, and did disdain to talk ;
At least to talk where he must not command.

King. Such sullenness, and in a man so brave,
Must have some other cause than his captivity.
Did Zara, then, request he might attend her ?

Gar. My lord, she did.

King. That, join'd with his behaviour,
Begets a doubt. I'd have 'em watch'd ; perhaps
Her chains hang heavier on him than his own.

*Enter ALONZO, ZARA, and OSMYN bound, conducted
by PEREZ and a guard, and attended by SELIM and
several mutes and eunuchs in a train.*

King. What welcome, and what honours, beautiful
Zara,

A king and conqueror can give, are yours.
A conqueror indeed, where you are won ;
Who with such lustre strike admiring eyes, 359
That had our pomp been with your presence grac'd,
Th' expecting crowd had been deceiv'd ; and seen
The monarch enter not triumphant, but
In pleasing triumph led ; your beauty's slave.

Zar. If I on any terms could condescend
To like captivity, or think those honours,
Which conquerors in courtesy bestow,

Of equal value with unborrow'd rule
And native right to arbitrary sway,
I might be pleas'd, when I behold this train
With usual homage wait : but when I feel
These bonds, I look with loathing on myself,
And scorn vile slavery, though doubly hid
Beneath mock-praises, and dissembled state.

King. Those bonds! 'Twas my command you
should be free.

How durst you, Perez, disobey ?

Perez. Great Sir,

Your order was she should not wait your triumph;
But at some distance follow, thus attended.

King. 'Tis false; 'twas more; I bid she should be free;
If not in words, I bid it by my eyes. 380
Her eyes did more than bid—Free her and hers
With speed—yet stay—my hands alone can make
Fit restitution here—Thus I release you,
And by releasing you, enslave myself.

Zar. Such favours, so conferr'd, tho' when unsought;
Deserve acknowledgment from noble minds.
Such thanks, as one hating to be oblig'd—
Yet hating more ingratitude, can pay,
I offer.

King. Born to excel, and to command !
As by transcendent beauty to attract
All eyes, so by pre-eminence of soul
To rule all hearts.

Garcia, what's he, who with contracted brow,

(Beholding Osmyn as they unbind him.

And sullen port, glooms downwards with his eyes;
At once regardless of his chains, or liberty?

Gar. That, Sir, is he of whom I spoke; that's Osmyn.

King. He answers well the character you gave him.
Whence comes it, valiant Osmyn, that a man
So great in arms, as thou art said to be, 400
So hardly can endure captivity,
The common chance of war?

Osm. Because captivity
Has robb'd me of a dear and just revenge.

King. I understand not that.

Osm. I would not have you.

Zar. That gallant Moor in battle lost a friend,
Whom more than life he lov'd; and the regret,
Of not revenging on his foes that loss,
Has caus'd this melancholy and despair.

King. She does excuse him; 'tis as I suspected.
[To Gons.]

Gon. That friend might be herself; seem not to heed
His arrogant reply: she looks concern'd.

King. I'll have enquiry made; perhaps his friend
Yet lives, and is a prisoner. His name?

Zar. Heli.

King. Garcia, that search shall be your care:
It shall be mine to pay devotion here;
At this fair shrine to lay my laurels down,
And raise love's altar on the spoils of war. 420
Conquest and triumph, now, are mine no more;
Nor will I victory in camps adore:
"For, ling'ring there, in long suspense she stands,

“ Shifting the prize in unresolving hands ;
 “ Unus’d to wait, I broke through her delay,
 “ Fix’d her by force, and snatch’d the doubtful day.
 “ Now late I find that war is but her sport;
 “ In love the goddess keeps her awful court ;”
 Fickle in fields, unsteadily she flies,
 But rules with settled sway in Zara’s eyes. [Exit.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Representing the Aisle of a Temple. “ GARCIA, HELI,
 PEREZ.

“ Garcia.

“ THIS way we’re told, Osmyn was seen to walk ;
 “ Choosing this lonely mansion of the dead,
 “ To mourn, brave Heli, thy mistaken fate.
 “ Heli. Let Heav’n with thunder to the centre strike
 me,

“ If to arise in very deed from death,
 “ And to revisit, with my long-clos’d eyes,
 “ This living light, could to my soul or sense
 “ Afford a thought, or shew a glimpse of joy,
 “ In least proportion to the vast delight
 “ I feel, to hear of Osmyn’s name ; to hear
 “ That Osmyn lives, and I again shall see him.

“ Garcia. I’ve heard, with admiration, of your
 friendship.

“ Per. Yonder, my lord, behold the noble Moor.

E

" *Heli.* Where? Where?

" *Gar.* I saw him not, nor any like him——

" *Per.* I saw him when I spoke, thwarting my view,
" And striding with distemper'd haste; his eyes
" Seem'd flame, and flash'd upon me with a glance;
" Then forward shot their fires which he pursu'd,
" As to some object frightful, yet not fear'd. 20

" *Gar.* Let's haste to follow him, and know the
cause.

" *Heli.* My lord, let me intreat you to forbear:

" Leave me alone, to find and cure the cause.

" I know his melancholy, and such starts

" Are usual to his temper. It might raise him

" To act some violence upon himself,

" So to be caught in an unguarded hour,

" And when his soul gives all her passion way,

" Secure and loose in friendly solitude.

" I know his noble heart would burst with shame,

" To be surpris'd by strangers in its frailty.

" *Gar.* Go, generous Heli, and relieve your friend.

" Far be it from me officiously to pry

" Or press upon the privacies of others. [*Exit Heli.*

" Perez, the king expects from our return

" To have his jealousy confirm'd, or clear'd,

" Of that appearing love which Zara bears

" To Osmyn; but some other opportunity

" Must make that plain.

" *Per.* To me 'twas long since plain,

" And ev'ry look from him and her confirms it.

" *Gar.* If so, unhappiness attends their love,

" And I could pity 'em. I hear some coming.

" The friends, perhaps, are met; let us avoid 'em.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Alm. It was a fancy'd noise, for all is hush'd.

Leon. It bore the accent of a human voice.

Alm. It was thy fear, or else some transient wind
Whistling through hollows of this vaulted aisle.
We'll listen——

Leon. Hark!

Alm. No, all is hush'd, and still as death—'tis dreadful!

How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
To bear aloft its arch'd and pond'rous roof,
By its own weight made stedfast and immoveable,
Looking tranquility. It strikes an awe
And terror on my aking sight; the tombs
And monumental caves of death look cold,
And shoot a chillness to my trembling heart.
Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice; 60
Nay, quickly speak to me, and let me hear
Thy voice—my own affrights me with its echoes.

Leon. Let us return; the horror of this place
And silence will encrease your melancholy.

Alm. It may my fears, but cannot add to that.
No, I will on; shew me Anselmo's tomb,
Lead me o'er bones and skulls, and mould'ring earth,
Of human bodies; for I'll mix with them,

Or wind me in the shroud of some pale corse
Yet green in earth, rather than be the bride
Of Garcia's more detested bed : that thought
Exerts my spirits ; and my present fears
Are lost in dread of greater ill. Then shew me,
Lead me, for I am bolder grown : lead on
Where I may kneel, and pay my vows again
To him, to Heav'n, and my Alphonso's soul.

“ *Leon.* I go; but Heav'n can tell with what regret,
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter HELI.

wander thro' this maze of monuments,
Yet cannot find him—Hark ! sure tis the voice
Of one complaining—There it sounds—I'll follow it.
[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

*Opening, discovers a Place of Tombs : one Monument front-
ing the view greater than the rest.*

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Leon. Behold the sacred vault, within whose womb
The poor remains of good Anselmo rest,
Yet fresh and unconsum'd by time or worms.
What do I see? Oh, Heav'n ! either my eyes
Are false, or still the marble door remains
Unclos'd ; the iron gates, that lead to death

Beneath, are still wide stretch'd upon their hinge,
And staring on us with unfolded leaves.

Alm. Sure 'tis the friendly yawn of death for me;
And that dumb mouth, significant in show,
Invites me to the bed, where I alone
Shall rest; shews me the grave, where nature, weary
And long oppress'd with woes and bending cares,
May lay the burden down, and sink in slumbers
Of peace eternal. "Death, grim death, will fold
"Me in his leaden arms, and press me close
"To his cold clayey breast:" my father then
Will cease his tyranny; and Garcia too
Will fly my pale deformity with loathing.
My soul, enlarg'd from its vile bonds, will mount,
And range the starry orbs, and milky ways, 101
"Of that refulgent world, where I shall swim
"In liquid light, and float on seas of bliss
To my Alphonso's soul. Oh, joy too great!
Oh, ecstasy of thought! Help me, Anselmo;
Help me, Alphonso; take me, reach thy hand;
To thee, to thee I call, to thee, Alphonso;
Oh, Alphonso!

OSMYN ascending from the tomb,

Osm. Who calls that wretched thing that was Alphonso?

Alm. Angels, and all the host of Heav'n, support me?

Osm. Whence is that voice, whose shrillness from the grave,

And growing to his father's shroud, roots up
Alphonso?

Alm. Mercy! Providence! Oh, speak,
Speak to it quickly, quickly; speak to me,
Comfort me, help me, hold me, hide me, hide me,
Leonora, in thy bosom, from the light,
And from my eyes.

Osm. Amazement and illusion!
Rivet and nail me where I stand, ye pow'rs, 120
[*Coming forward.*]

That, motionless, I may be still deceiv'd.
Let me not stir, nor breathe, lest I dissolve
That tender, lovely form of painted air,
So like Almeria. Ha! it sinks, it falls;
I'll catch it ere it goes, and grasp her shade.
'Tis life! 'tis warm! 'tis she, 'tis she herself!
Nor dead, nor shade, but breathing and alive!
It is Almeria, 'tis my wife!

Enter HELI.

Leon. Alas! she stirs not yet, nor lifts her eyes;
He too is fainting—Help me, help me, stranger,
Whoe'er thou art, and lend thy hand to raise
These bodies.

Hel. Ha! 'tis he! and with—Almeria!
Oh, miracle of happiness! Oh, joy
Unhop'd for! does Almeria live?

Osm. Where is she?
Let me behold, and touch her, and be sure

'Tis she ; " shew me her face, and let me feel
 " Her lips with mine——'Tis she, I'm not deceiv'd ;
 " I taste her breath, I warm'd her and am warm'd."
 Look up, Almeria, bless me with thy eyes ; 141
 Look on thy love, thy lover, and thy husband.

Alm. I've sworn I'll not wed Garcia : why d'ye force
 me.

Is this a father ?

Osm. Look on thy Alphonso.

Thy father is not here, my love, nor Garcia :
 Nor am I what I seem, but thy Alphonso.

" Wilt thou not know me ?" Hast thou then forgot
 me ?

" Hast thou thy eyes, yet canst not see Alphonso ?"
 Am I so alter'd, or art thou so chang'd,
 That seeing my disguise thou seest not me ?

Alm. It is, it is Alphonso ; 'tis his face,
 His voice, I know him now, I know him all.

" Oh, take me to thy arms, and bear me hence,

" Back to the bottom of the boundless deep,

" To seas beneath, where thou so long hast dwelt.

Oh, how hast thou return'd ? How hast thou charm'd

The wildness of the waves and rocks to this ?

That thus relenting they have giv'n thee back

To earth, to light and life, to love and me. 160

Osm. Oh, I'll not ask, nor answer, how or why

We both have backward trod the paths of fate,

To meet again in life ; to know I have thee,

Is knowing more than any circumstance,

Or means, by which I have thee——

To fold thee thus, to press thy balmy lips,
And gaze upon thy eyes, is so much joy,
I have not leisure to reflect, or know,
Or trifle time in thinking.

Alm. Stay a while——

Let me look on thee yet a little more.

“*Osm.* What wouldst thou? thou dost put me from thee.

“*Alm.* Yes.

“*Osm.* And why? What dost thou mean? Why dost thou gaze so?

“*Alm.* I know not; 'tis to see thy face, I think——”
It is too much! too much to bear and live!
To see thee thus again is such profusion
Of joy, of bliss——I cannot bear——I must
Be mad——I cannot be transported thus.

Osm. Thou excellence, thou joy, thou Heav'n of love! 180

Alm. Where hast thou been? and how art thou alive?

“How is all this? All-pow'rful Heav'n, what are we?

“Oh, my strain'd heart——let me again behold thee,

“For I weep to see thee——Art thou not paler?

“Much, much; how thou art chang'd!

“*Osm.* Not in my love.

“*Alm.* No, no, thy griefs, I know, have done this to thee.

“Thou has wept much, Alphonso; and, I fear,

“Too much, too tenderly, lamented me.

“*Osm.* Wrong not my love, to say too tenderly.

“No more, my life; talk not of tears or grief;

" Affliction is no more, now thou art found.

" Why dost thou weep, and hold thee from my arms,

" My arms which ake to hold thee fast, and grow

" To thee with twining? Come, come to my heart.

" *Alm.* I will, for I should never look enough.

" They would have marry'd me; but I had sworn

" To Heav'n and thee, and sooner would have dy'd—

" *Osm.* Perfection of all faithfulness and love! 199

" *Alm.* Indeed I would—Nay, I would tell thee all,

" If I could speak; how I have mourn'd and pray'd:

" For I have pray'd to thee, as to a saint;

" And thou hast heard my pray'r; for thou art come

" To my distress, to my despair, which Heav'n

" Could only, by restoring thee, have cur'd.

" *Osm.* Grant me but life, good Heav'n, but length
of days,

" To pay some part, some little of this debt,

" This countless sum of tenderness and love,

" For which I stand engag'd to this all-excellence:

" Then bear me in a whirlwind to my fate,

" Snatch me from life, and cut me short unwarn'd:

" Then, then, 'twill be enough—I shall be old,

" I shall have pass'd all æras then

" Of yet unmeasur'd time; when I have made

" This exquisite, this most amazing goodness,

" Some recompence of love and matchless truth.

" *Alm.* 'Tis more than recompence to see thy face:

" If Heav'n is greater joy it is no happiness,

" For 'tis not to be borne—What shall I say?

" I have a thousand things to know and ask, 220

“ And speak—That thou art here beyond all hope,
 “ All thought; that all at once thou art before me,
 “ And with such suddenness hast hit my sight,
 “ Is such surprise, such mystery, such extasy,
 “ It hurries all my soul, and stuns my sense.”
 Sure from thy father's tomb thou didst arise?

Osm. I did; and thou, my love, didst call me;
 thou.

Alm. True; but how cam'st thou there? Wert
 thou alone?

Osm. I was, and lying on my father's lead,
 When broken echoes of a distant voice
 Disturb'd the sacred silence of the vault,
 In murmurs round my head. I rose and listen'd,
 And thought I heard thy spirit call Alphonso;
 I thought I saw thee too; but, Oh, I thought not
 That I indeed should be so blest to see thee——

Alp. But still, how cam'st thou thither? How thus?
 ——Ha!

What's he, who, like thy self, is started here
 Ere seen?

Osm. Where? Ha! What do I see, Antonio!
 I'm fortunate indeed——my friend too, safe! 240

Heli. Most happily, in finding you thus bless'd.

Alm. More miracles! Antonio too, escap'd!

Osm. And twice escap'd; both from the rage of
 seas

And war: for in the fight I saw him fall.

Heli. But fell unhurt, a pris'ner as yourself,
 And as yourself made free; hither I came,

Impatiently to seek you, where I knew
Your grief would lead you to lament Anselmo.

" *Osm.* There are no wonders, or else all is wonder.

" *Heli.* I saw you on the ground, and rais'd you up.

" When with astonishment I saw Almeria.

" *Osm.* I saw her too, and therefore saw not thee.

" *Alm.* Nor I; nor could I, for my eyes were
" yours."

Osm. What means the bounty of all-gracious
Heav'n,

That preserving still, with open hand,
It scatters good, as in a waste of mercy!
Where will this end? But Heav'n is infinite
In all, and can continue to bestow,
When scanty number shall be spent in telling.

Leon. Or I'm deceiv'd, or I beheld the glimpse
Of two in shining habits cross the aisle; 261
Who by their pointing, seem to mark this place.

Alm. Sure I have dreamt, if we must part so soon.

Osm. I wish at least our parting were a dream.
Or we could sleep 'till we again were met.

Heli. Zara with Selim, Sir, I saw and know 'em:
You must be quick, for love will lend her wings.

Alm. What love? Who is she? Why are you
alarm'd?

Osm. She's the reverse of thee; she's my unhap-
piness.

Harbour no thought that may disturb thy peace;

" But gently take thyself away, lest she

" Should come, and see the straining of my eyes

"To follow thee."

Retire, my love, I'll think how we may meet
To part no more; my friend will tell thee all;
How I escap'd, how I am here, and thus;
How I'm not call'd Alphonso now, but Osmyn;
And he Heli. All, all he will unfold,
Ere next we meet——

Alm. Sure we shall meet again——

Osm. We shall; we part not but to meet again.
Gladness and warmth of ever-kindling love
Dwell with thee, and revive thy heart in absence.

[*Exeunt Alm. Leon. and Heli.*]

Yet I behold her—yet—and now no more.
Turn your lights inward, eyes, and view my thoughts,
So shall you still behold her—" 'twill not be.
"Oh, impotence of sight! Mechanic sense!
"Which to exterior objects ow'st thy faculty,
"Not seeing of election, but necessity.
"Thus do our eyes, as do all common mirrors,
"Successively reflect succeeding images:
"Not what they would, but must; a star, or toad;
"Just as the hand of chance administers.
"Not so the mind, whose undetermin'd view
"Revolves, and to the present adds the past:
"Essaying farther to futurity;
"But that in vain. I have Almeria here
"At once, as I before have seen her often—

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zar. See where he stands, folded and fix'd to earth,

Stiff'ning in thought, a statue among statues. 300

Why, cruel Osmyn, dost thou fly me thus?

"Is it well done? Is this then the return

"For fame, for honour, and for empire lost?

"But what is loss of honour, fame, and empire?

"Is this the recompence reserv'd for love?

"Why, dost thou leave my eyes, and fly my arms,

"To find this place of horror and obscurity?"

Am I more loathsome to thee than the grave,

That thou dost seek to shield thee there, and shun

My love? But to the grave I'll follow thee—

He looks not, minds not, hears not? barb'rous man!

Am I neglected thus? Am I despis'd

Not hear'd! Ungrateful Osmyn!

Osm. Ha, 'tis Zara!

Zar. Yes, traitor; Zara, lost, abandon'd Zara,

Is a regardless suppliant now, to Osmyn.

The slave, the wretch that she redeem'd from death,

Disdains to listen now, or look on Zara.

Osm. Far be the guilt of such reproaches from me;

Lost in myself, and blinded by my thoughts, 320

I saw you not till now.

Zar. Now then you see me—

But with such dumb and thankless eyes you look,

Better I was unseen, than seen thus coldly.

Osm. What would you from a wretch who came to

mourn,

And only for his sorrows chose this solitude?

Look round; joy is not here, nor cheerfulness.

You have pursu'd misfortune to its dwelling,

Yet look for gaiety and gladness there.

Zar. Inhuman! Why, why dost thou rack me thus?

And, with perverseness, from the purpose, answer?
What is't to me, this house of misery?
What joy do I require? if thou dost mourn,
I come to mourn with thee, to share thy griefs,
And give thee, for 'em, in exchange, my love.

Osm. Oh, that's the greatest grief—I am so poor,
I have not wherewithal to give again.

Zar. Thou hast a heart, tho' 'tis a savage one?
Give it me as it is; I ask no more
For all I've done, and all I have endur'd : 340
For saving thee, when I beheld thee first,
Driv'n by the tide upon my country's coast,
Pale and expiring, drench'd in briny waves,
Thou and thy friend, 'till my compassion found thee;
Compassion! scarce will't own that name, so soon,
So quickly, was it love; for thou wert godlike
E'en then. Kneeling on earth, I loos'd my hair,
And with it dry'd thy watery cheeks, then chaf'd
Thy temples, till reviving blood arose,
And, like the morn, vermilion'd o'er thy face.
Oh, Heav'n! how did my heart rejoice and ake,
When I beheld the day-break of thy eyes,
And felt the balm of thy respiring lips!

Osm. Oh, call not to my mind what you have
“ done;

“ It sets a debt of that account before me,
“ Which shews me poor and bankrupt even in hopes.

“ Zar. The faithful Selim, and my women, know
 “ The danger which I tempted to conceal you.
 “ You know how I abus’d the cred’lous king ;
 “ What arts I us’d to make you pass on him, 360
 “ When he receiv’d you as the prince of Fez ;
 “ And as my kinsman, honour’d and advanc’d you.”
 Oh ! why do I relate what I have done ?
 What did I not ? Was’t not for you this war
 Commenc’d ? Not knowing who you were, nor why
 You hated Manuel, I urg’d my husband
 To this invasion ; where he late was lost,
 Where all is lost, and I am made a slave.

* Osm. *You pierce my soul—I own it all—But while
 The power is wanting to repay such benefits,
 ’Tis treble anguish to a generous heart.*

Zara. *Repay me with thy heart—What! dost thou start?
 Make no reply ! Is this thy gratitude ?*

Look on me now, from empire fall’n to slavery ;
 Think on my suff’rings first, then look on me ;
 Think on the cause of all, then view thyself :
 Reflect on Osmyn, and then look on Zara,
 The fall’n, the lost, and now the captive Zara,
 And now abandon’d—Say, what then is Osmyn ?

Osm. A fatal wretch—A huge, stupendous ruin,
 That tumbling on its prop, crush’d all beneath, 381
 And bore contiguous palaces to earth.

* The lines printed in Italics are not in the original, but are now given to the reader as delivered in the representation at Drury-lane Theatre.

Zar. Yet thus, thus fall'n, thus levell'd with the vilest,
If I have gain'd thy love, 'tis glorious ruin ;
Ruin ! 'tis still to reign, and to be more
A queen ; for what are riches, empire, power,
But larger means to gratify the will ?
The steps on which we tread, to rise and reach
Our wish ; and that obtain'd, down with the scaffolding
Of sceptres, crowns, and thrones ; they've serv'd their
end,

And are, like lumber, to be left and scorn'd.

Osm. Why was I made the instrument to throw
In bonds the frame of this exalted mind ?

Zara. We may be free ; the conqueror is mine ;
In chains unseen I hold him by the heart,
And can unwind or strain him as I please.
Give me thy love, I'll give thee liberty.

Osm. In vain you offer, and in vain require
What neither can bestow. Set free yourself,
And leave a slave the wretch that would be so. 400

Zar. Thou canst not mean so poorly as thou talk'st.

Osm. Alas ! you know me not.

Zar. Not who thou art :

But what this last ingratitude declares,
This groveling baseness—Thou say'st true, I know
Thee not ; for what thou art yet wants a name ;
But something so unworthy and so vile,
That to have lov'd thee makes me yet more lost,
Than all the malice of my other fate.
Traitor, monster, cold, and perfidious slave ;

A slave not daring to be free ; nor dares
To love above him ; for 'tis dangerous.

" 'Tis that, I know ; for thou dost look, with eyes
" Sparkling desire, and trembling to possess.

" I know my charms have reach'd thy very soul,

" And thrill'd thee through with darted fires ; but
" thou

" Dost fear so much, thou dar'st not wish." The
king !

There, there's the dreadful sound, the king's thy rival !

Scl. Madam, the king is here, and entering now.

Zar. As I could wish ; by Heav'n I'll be reveng'd.

Enter the KING, PEREZ, and Attendants.

King. Why does the fairest of her kind withdraw
Her shining from the day, to gild this scene
Of death and night ? Ha ! what disorder's this ?
Somewhat I heard of king and rival mention'd.
What's he that dares be rival to the king,
Or lift his eyes to like where I adore ?

Zar. There, he, your prisoner, and that was my
slave.

King. How ? better than my hopes ! Does she ac-
cuse him ? *[Aside.]*

Zar. Am I become so low by my captivity,
And do your arms so lessen what they conquer,
That Zara must be made the sport of slaves ?
And shall the wretch, whom yester sun beheld
Waiting my nod, the creature of my pow'r,
Presume to-day to plead audacious love,

And build bold hopes on my dejected fate ?

King. Better for him to tempt the rage of Heav'n,
And wrench the bolt red-hissing from the hand
Of him that thunders, than but to think that inso-
lence.

" 'Tis daring for a god." Hence to the wheel 440
With that Ixion, who aspires to hold
Divinity embrac'd ; to whips and prisons
Drag him with speed, and rid me of his face.

[*Guards seize Osmyn, and exeunt.*]

Zar. Compassion led me to bemoan his state,
Whose former faith had merited much more :
And, through my hopes in you, I undertook
He should be set at large ! thence sprung his inso-
lence,

And what was charity, he constru'd love.

King. Enough ; his punishment be what you please.
But let me lead you from this place of sorrow,
To one where young delights attend, " and joys,
" Yet new, unborn, and blooming in the bud,
" Which wait to be full-blown at your approach,
" And spread, like roses, to the morning sun :"
Where ev'ry hour shall roll in circling joys,
And love shall wing the tedious-wasting day.
Life, without love, is load ; and time stands still :
What we refuse to him, to death we give ;
And then, then only, when we love, we live.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Prison. OSMYN with a Paper.

BUT now, and I was clos'd within the tomb
That holds my father's ashes ; and but now,
Where he was pris'ner, I am too imprison'd.
Sure 'tis the hand of Heav'n that leads me thus,
And for some purpose points out these remembrances,
In a dark corner of my cell I found

This paper ; what it is this light will shew,
' If my Alphonso'——Ha ! [Reading.]

' If my Alphonso live, restore him, Heav'n ;
' Give me more weight, crush my declining years
' With bolts, with chains, imprisonment and want ;
' But bless my son, visit not him for me.

It is his hand ; this was his pray'r——yet more :

' Let ev'ry hair, which sorrow by the roots [Reading.]

' Tears from my hoary and devoted head,

' Be doubled in thy mercies to my son :

' Not for myself, but him, hear me, all-gracious——

'Tis wanting what should follow——Heav'n should
follow,

But 'tis torn off——Why shou'd that word alone
Be torn from this petition ? 'Twas to Heav'n, 20
But Heav'n was deaf, Heav'n heard him not ; but
thus,

Thus as the name of Heav'n from this is torn,
So did it tear the ears of mercy from

His voice, shutting the gates of pray'r against him.
 If piety be thus debarr'd access
 On high, and of good men the very best
 Is singled out to bleed, and bear the scourge,
 What is reward? Or what is punishment?
 But who shall dare to tax eternal justice!
 Yet I may think—I may, I must; for thought
 Precedes the will to think, and error lives
 Ere reason can be born. “Reason, the power
 “To guess at right and wrong, the twinkling lamp
 “Of wand’ring life, that winks and wakes by turns,
 “Fooling the follower, betwixt shade and shining.”
 What noise! Who’s there? My friend? How cam’st
 thou hither?

Enter HELI.

Heli. The time’s too precious to be spent in telling.
 The captain influenc’d by Almeria’s power,
 Gave order to the guards for my admittance.

Osm. How does Almeria? But I know she is 40
 As I am. Tell me, may I hope to see her?

Heli. You may. Anon, at midnight, when the
 king

Is gone to rest, and Garcia is retir’d,
 “(Who takes the privilege to visit late,
 “Presuming on a bridegroom’s right)” she’ll come.

Osm. She’ll come; ’tis what I wish, yet what I fear.
 She’ll come; but whither, and to whom? Oh,
 Heav’n!

To a vile prison, and a captiv’d wretch;

To one, whom, had she never known, she had
Been happy. Why, why was that heav'nly creature
Abandon'd o'er to love what Heav'n forsakes ?

Why does she follow, with unwearied steps,
One, who has tir'd misfortune with pursuing ?

" One driven about the world, like blasted leaves
" And chaff, the sport of adverse winds ; 'till late,
" At length imprison'd in some cleft of rock,
" On earth it rests, and rots to silent dust."

Heli. Have hopes, and hear the voice of better fate.
I've learn'd there are disorders ripe for mutiny
Among the troops, who thought to share the plunder,
Which Manuel to his own use and avarice 61
Converts. This news has reach'd Valentia's frontiers,
Where many of your subjects, long oppress'd
With tyranny, and grievous impositions,
Are risen in arms, and call for chiefs to head
And lead them to regain their rights and liberty.

Osm. By Heav'n thou'ast rous'd me from my lethargy,

The spirit which was deaf to my own wrongs,
And the loud cries of my dead father's blood,
" Deaf to revenge—nay, which refus'd to hear
" The piercing sighs and murmurs of my love
" Yet unenjoy'd ; what not Almeria could
" Revive or raise," my people's voice has waken'd.

Heli. Our posture of affairs, and scanty time
My lord, require you should compose yourself.

Osm. Oh, my Antonio ! I am all on fire ;
My soul is up in arms, ready to charge

And bear amidst the foe with conqu'ring troops.
 I hear 'em call to lead 'em on to liberty,
 To victory; their shouts and clamours rend 80
 My ears, and reach the Heav'ns. Where is the king?
 Where is Alphonso? Ha! where? where indeed?
 Oh, I could tear and burst the strings of life,
 To break these chains. Off, off, ye stains of royalty;
 Off, slavery. Oh, curse! that I alone
 Can beat and flutter in my cage, when I
 Would soar and stoop at victory beneath.

Heli. Abate this ardour, Sir, or we are lost.

"Our posture of affairs and scanty time,

"My lord, require you should compose yourself,

"And think on what we may reduce to practice."

Zara, the cause of your restraint, may be

The means of liberty restor'd. That gain'd,

Occasion will not fail to point out ways

For your escape. Mean time, I've thought already

With speed and safety to convey myself,

Where not far off some malcontents hold council

Nightly, who hate this tyrant; some, who love

Anselmo's memory, and will, for certain,

When they shall know you live, assist your cause.

Osm. My friend and counsellor, as thou think'st fit,

So do. I will, with patience, wait my fortune.

Heli. When Zara comes, abate of your aversion.

Osm. I hate her not, nor can dissemble love: 101

But as I may I'll do. "I have a paper

"Which I would shew thee, friend, but that the

"sight

" Would hold thee here, and clog thy expedition.
 " Within I found it, by my father's hand
 " 'Twas writ; a pray'r for me, wherein appears
 " Paternal love prevailing o'er his sorrows;
 " Such sanctity, such tenderness, so mix'd
 " With grief, as would draw tears from inhumanity.
 " *Heli.* The care of Providence sure left it there,
 " To arm your mind with hope. Such piety
 " Was never heard in vain. Heav'n has in store
 " For you those blessings it withheld from him.
 " In that assurance live; which time, I hope,
 " And our next meeting will confirm."

Osm. Farewel,

My friend; the good thou dost deserve, attend thee.

[*Exit Heli.*

I've been to blame, and question'd with impiety
 The care of Heav'n. Not so my father bore
 More anxious grief. This should have better taught
 me;

120

" This lesson, in some hour of inspiration
 " By him set down, when his pure thoughts were
 " borne,
 " Like fumes of sacred incense o'er the clouds,
 " And wafted thence, on angel's wings, thro' ways
 " Of light, to the bright Source of all. For there
 " He in the book of prescience saw this day;
 " And waking to the world and mortal sense,
 " Left this example of his resignation,"
 This his last legacy to me: which, here,
 I'll treasure as more worth than diadems,

Or all extended rule of regal pow'r.

Enter ZARA, veiled.

Osm. What brightness breaks upon me thus through
shades,

And promises a day to this dark dwelling ?
Is it my love ?—

Zar. Oh, that thy heart had taught

[Lifting her veil.

Thy tongue that saying !

Osm. Zara ! I am betray'd

By my surprize.

Zar. What! does my face displease thee ?

That, having seen it, thou dost turn thy eyes 140

Away, as from deformity and horror ?

If so, this sable curtain shall again

Be drawn, and I will stand before thee, seeing,

And unseen. Is it my love ? Ask again

That question ; speak again in that soft voice ?

And look again with wishes in thy eyes.

Oh, no ! thou canst not, for thou seest me now,

As she whose savage breast hath been the cause

Of these thy wrongs ; as she whose barb'rous rage

Has loaded thee with chains and galling irons.

" Well dost thou scorn me, and upbraid my false-

" ness ;

" Could one who lov'd, thus torture whom she lov'd ?

" No, no, it must be hatred, dire revenge,

" And detestation, that could use thee thus.

" So dost thou think ; then do but tell me so ;

" Tell me, and thou shalt see how I'll revenge
 " Thee on this false one, how I'll stab and tear
 " This heart of flint, 'till it shall bleed ; and thou
 " Shalt weep for mine, forgetting thy own miseries."

Osm. You wrong me, beauteous Zara, to believe
 I bear my fortunes with so low a mind, 161

" As still to meditate revenge on all
 " Whom chance, or fate, working by secret causes,
 " Has made, per-force, subservient to that end
 " The heav'nly pow'rs allot me ;" no, not you,
 But destiny and inauspicious stars
 Have cast me down to this low being. Or
 Granting you had, from you I have deserv'd it.

Zar. Canst thou forgive me then? wilt thou believe

So kindly of my fault, to call it madness?
 Oh, give that madness yet a milder name,
 And call it passion! then, be still more kind,
 And call that passion love.

Osm. Give it a name,
 Or being, as you please, such I will think it.

Zar. Oh, thou dost wound me more with this thy
 goodness,
 Than e'er thou couldst with bitterest reproaches;
 Thy anger could not pierce thus to my heart.

Osm. Yet I could wish——

Zar. Haste me to know it; what? 180

Osm. That at this time I had not been this thing.

Zar. What thing?

Osm. This slave.

Zar. Oh Heav'n! my fears interpret
This thy silence; somewhat of high concern,
Long fashioning within thy labouring mind,
And now just ripe for birth, my rage has ruin'd.
Have I done this? Tell me, am I so curs'd?

Osm. Time may have still one fated hour to come,
Which, wing'd with liberty, might overtake
Occasion past.

Zar. Swift as occasion, I
Myself will fly; and earlier than the morn,
Wake thee to freedom. "Now 'tis late; and yet
"Some news few minutes past, arriv'd, which seem'd
"To shake the temper of the king—Who knows
"What racking cares disease a monarch's bed?
"Or love, that late at night still lights his lamp,
"And strikes his rays thro' dusk and folded lids,
"Forbidding rest, may stretch his eyes awake, 200
"And force their balls abroad at this dead hour.
"I'll try."

Osm. I have not merited this grace;
Nor, should my secret purpose take effect,
Can I repay, as you require, such benefits.

Zar. Thou canst not owe me more, nor have I more
To give, than I've already lost. But now,
So does the form of our engagements rest,
Thou hast the wrong till I redeem thee hence;
That done, I leave thy justice to return
My love. Adieu.

[Exit.

Osm. This woman has a soul
Of godlike mould, intrepid and commanding,

And challenges, in spite of me, my best
Esteem ; “ to this, she’s fair, few more can boast
“ Of personal charms, or with less vanity
“ Might hope to captivate the hearts of kings ;”
But she has passions which outstrip the wind,
And tear her virtues up, as tempests root
The sea. I fear, when she shall know the truth, 220
Some swift and dire event of her blind rage
Will make all fatal. But behold, she comes
For whom I fear, to shield me from my fears,
The cause and comfort of my boding heart.

Enter ALMERIA.

My life, my health, my liberty, my all !
How shall I welcome thee to this sad place ?
How speak to thee the words of joy and transport ?
How run into thy arms, withheld by fetters ;
Or take thee into mine, while I’m thus manacled
And pinion’d like a thief or murderer ?
Shall I not hurt and bruise thy tender body,
And stain thy bosom with the rust of these
Rude irons ? Must I meet thee thus, Almeria ?

Alm. Thus, thus ; we parted, thus to meet again.
Thou told’st me thou would’st think how we might
meet

To part no more—Now we will part no more ;
For these thy chains, or death, shall join us ever.

Osm. Hard means to ratify that word !—Oh, cruelty !
“ That ever I should think beholding thee
“ A torture !—Yet such is the bleeding anguish 240

" Of my heart, to see thy sufferings—Oh, Heav'n!

" That I could almost turn my eyes away, 241

" Or wish thee from my sight.

" *Alm.* Oh, say not so!

" Tho' 'tis because thou lov'st me. Do not say,

" On any terms, that thou dost wish me from thee.

" No, no, 'tis better thus, that we together

" Feed on each other's heart, devour our woes

" With mutual appetite; and mingling in

" One cup the common stream of both our eyes,

" Drink bitter draughts, with never-slaking thirst;

" Thus better, than for any cause to part.

" What dost thou think? Look not so tenderly

" Upon me—speak, and take me in thy arms—

" Thou canst not; thy poor arms are bound, and

" strive

" In vain with the remorseless chains, which gnaw

" And eat into thy flesh, fest'ring thy limbs

" With rankling rust."

Osm. Oh! O——

Alm. Give me that sigh. 260

Why dost thou heave, and stifle in thy griefs?

Thy heart will burst, thy eyes look red, and start;

Give thy soul way, and tell me thy dark thought.

Osm. For this world's rule, I would not wound thy
breast

With such a dagger as then stuck my heart.

Alm. Why? why? To know it, cannot wound me more

Than knowing thou hast felt it. Tell it me,

—Thou giv'st me pain with too much tenderness.

Osm. And thy excessive love distracts my sense.
Oh, wouldst thou be less killing, soft, or kind,
Grief could not double thus his darts against me.

Alm. Thou dost me wrong, and grief too robs my
heart,

If there he shoot not every other shaft;
Thy second self should feel each other wound,
And woe should be in equal portions dealt.
I am thy wife—

Osm. Oh, thou hast search'd too deep :
There, there I bleed ; there pull the cruel cords,
That strain my cracking nerves ; engines and wheels,
That piece-meal grind, are beds of down and balm
To that soul-racking thought. 281

Alm. Then I am curs'd
Indeed, if that be so ! if I'm thy torment,
Kill me, then, kill me, dash me with thy chains,
Tread on me : “ What, am I the bosom-snake
“ That sucks thy warm life-blood, and gnaws thy
“ heart ;

“ Oh, that thy words had force to break those bonds,
“ As they have strength to tear this heart in sunder ;
“ So should'st thou be at large from all oppression.”
Am I, am I of all thy woes the worst ?

Osm. My all of bliss, my everlasting life,
Soul of my soul, and end of all my wishes,
Why dost thou thus unman me with thy words,
“ And melt me down to mingle with thy weepings ?
“ Why dost thou ask ? Why dost thou talk thus
“ piercingly ?”

Thy sorrows have disturb'd thy peace of mind,
And thou dost speak of miseries impossible.

Alm. Didst not thou say that racks and wheels were
balm

And beds of ease, to thinking me thy wife ?

Osm. No, no ; nor should the subtlest pains that
hell

300

Or hell-born malice can invent, extort

A wish or thought from me to have thee other.

But thou wilt know what harrows up my heart :

Thou art my wife—nay, thou art yet my bride—

The sacred union of connubial love

Yet unaccomplish'd : “ his mysterious rites

“ Delay'd ; nor has our hymeneal torch

“ Yet lighted up his last most grateful sacrifice ;

“ But dash'd with rain from eyes, and swail'd with

“ sighs,

“ Burns dim, and glimmers with expiring light.”

Is this dark cell a temple for that god ?

Or this vile earth an altar for such offerings ?

This den for slaves, this dungeon damp'd with woes ;

“ Is this our marriage bed ? are these our joys ?”

Is this to call thee mine ? Oh, hold, my heart !

To call thee mine ? Yes ; thus even thus to call

Thee mine, were comfort, joy, extremest extasy.

But, Oh, thou art not mine, not e'en in misery ;

And 'tis deny'd to me to be so bless'd,

As to be wretched with thee.

320

Alm. No ; not that

Th' extremest malice of our fate can hinder :

That still is left us, and on that we'll feed,
As on the leavings of calamity.
There we will feast and smile on past distress,
And hug, in scorn of it, our mutual ruin.

Osm. Oh, thou dost talk, my love, as one resolv'd,
Because not knowing danger. But look forward;
Think of to-morrow, when thou shalt be torn
From these weak, struggling, unextended arms:
Think how my heart will heave, and eyes will strain,
To grasp and reach what is deny'd my hands:
"Think how the blood will start, and tears will gush,
"To follow thee, my separating soul."
Think how I am, when thou shalt wed with Garcia!
Then will I smear these walls with blood, disfigure
And dash my face, and rive my clotted hair,
Break on the flinty floor my throbbing breast,
And grovel with gash'd hands to scratch a grave,
"Stripping my nails to tear this pavement up." 340
And bury me alive.

"*Alm.* Heart-breaking horror?

Osm. Then Garcia shall lie panting on thy bosom,
Luxurious, revelling amidst thy charms;
"And thou per-force must yield, and aid his trans-
sport."

Hell! Hell! have I not cause to rage and rave?
What are all racks, and wheels, and whips to this?
"Are they not soothing softness, sinking ease,
"And wafting air to this?" Oh, my Almeria!
What do the damn'd endure, but to despair,
But knowing Heav'n, to know it lost for ever?

Alm. Oh, I am struck ; thy words are bolts of ice,
Which shot into my breast, now melt and chill me.
“ I chatter, shake, and faint with thrilling fears.
“ No, hold me not—Oh, let us not support,
“ But sink each other, deeper yet, down, down,
“ Where levell'd low, no more we'll lift our eyes,
“ But prone, and dumb, rot the firm face of earth
“ With rivers of incessant scalding rain.”

Enter ZARA, PEREZ, SELIM.

Zar. Somewhat of weight to me requires his freedom. 440

Dare you dispute the king's command ? Behold
The royal signet.

Per. I obey ; yet beg
Your majesty one moment to defer
Your ent'ring, 'till the princess is return'd
From visiting the noble prisoner.

Zar. Ha!

What say'st thou ?

Osm. We are lost ! undone ! discover'd !
“ Retire, my life, with speed—Alas, we're seen : ”
Speak of compassion, let her hear you speak
Of interceding for me with the king ;
Say somewhat quickly to conceal our loves,
If possible——

Alm.——I cannot speak.

Osm. Let me
Conduct you forth, as not perceiving her,
But till she's gone ; then bless me thus again.

Zar. Trembling and weeping as he leads her forth!
Confusion in his face, and grief in hers! 450
'Tis plain I've been abus'd—"Death and destruc-
tion!

"How shall I search into this mystery?
"The bluest blast of pestilential air
"Strike, damp, deaden her charms, and kill his eyes;"
Perdition catch 'em both, and ruin part 'em.

Osm. This charity to one unknown, and thus

[*Aloud to Almeria as she goes out.*

Distress'd, Heav'n will repay; all thanks are poor.

[*Exit Almeria.*

Zar. Damn'd, damn'd dissembler! Yet I will be
calm,

Choak in my rage, and know the utmost depth
Of this deceiver—You seem much surpris'd. 460

Osm. At your return so soon and unexpected!

Zar. And so unwish'd, unwanted too it seems.
Confusion! Yet I will contain myself.
You're grown a favourite since last we parted;
Perhaps I'm saucy and intruding—

Osm.——Madam!

Zar. I did not know the princess' favourite.
Your pardon, sir—mistake me not; you think
I'm angry; you're deceiv'd. I came to set
You free; but shall return much better pleas'd,
To find you have an interest superior.

Osm. You do not come to mock my miseries?

Zar. I do.

Osm. I could at this time spare your mirth.

Zar. I know thou couldst; but I'm not often pleas'd.
 And will indulge it now. What miseries?
 Who would not be thus happily confin'd,
 To be the care of weeping majesty;
 To have contending queens at dead of night,
 Forsake their down, to wake with wat'ry eyes, 480
 And watch like tapers o'er your hours of rest?
 Oh, curse! I cannot hold——

Osm. Come, 'tis too much.

Zar. Villain!

Osm. How, madam!

Zar. Thou shalt die.

Osm. I thank you.

Zar. Thou ly'st, for now I know for whom thou'dst
 live.

Osm. Then you may know for whom I'd die.

Zar. Hell! Hell!

Yet I'll be calm——Dark and unknown betrayer!
 But now the dawn begins, and the slow hand
 Of Fate is stretch'd to draw the veil, and leave
 Thee bare, the naked mark of public view.

Osm. You may be still deceiv'd, 'tis in my pow'r—
Chain'd as I am, to fly from all my wrongs
And free myself, at once, from misery,
And you of me.

Zar. Ha! say'st thou—but I'll prevent it——
 Who waits there? As you will answer it, look this
 slave [To the guard.
 Attempt no means to make himself away. 500
 I've been deceiv'd. The public safety now

Requires he should be more confin'd, and none,
No, not the princess; suffer'd or to see
Or speak with him. I'll quit you to the king.
Vile and ingrate! too late thou shalt repent
The base injustice thou hast done my love:
Yes, thou shalt know, spite of thy past distress,
And all those ills which thou so long hast mourn'd;
Heav'n has no rage like love to hatred turn'd,
Nor hell a fury like a woman scorn'd. [Exit.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Room of State. ZARA, SELIM.

Zara.

THOU hast already rack'd me with thy stay;
Therefore require me not to ask thee twice:
Reply at once to all. What is concluded?

Sel. Your accusation highly has incens'd
The king, and were alone enough to urge
The fate of Osmyn; but to that, fresh news
Is since arriv'd, of more revolted troops.
'Tis certain Heli, too, is fled, and with him
(Which breeds amazement and distraction) some
Who bore high offices of weight and trust,
Both in the state and army. This confirms
The king in full belief of all you told him
Concerning Osmyn, and his correspondence
With them who first began the mutiny.

Wherefore a warrant for his death is sign'd;
And order giv'n for public execution.

Zar. Ha! haste thee! fly, prevent his fate and mine;
Find out the king, tell him I have of weight
More than his crown t' impart ere Osmyn die.

Sel. It needs not, for the king will straight be here,
And, as to your revenge, not his own int'rest, 21
Pretend to sacrifice the life of Osmyn.

Zar. What shall I say, invent, contrive, advise?
Somewhat to blind the king, and save his life,
In whom I live. "Spite of my rage and pride,
"I am a woman, and a lover still.

"Oh! 'tis more grief but to suppose his death,
"Than still to meet the rigour of his scorn.

"From my despair my anger had its source;

"When he is dead I must despair for ever.

"For ever! that's despair—it was distrust

"Before; distrust will ever be in love,

"And anger in distrust; both short-liv'd pains.

"But in despair, and ever-during death,

"No term, no bound, but infinite of woe.

"Oh, torment, but to think! what then to bear?

"Not to be borne"—Devise the means to shun it,
Quick; or, by Heav'n, this dagger drinks thy blood.

Sel. My life is yours, nor wish I to preserve it,
But to serve you. I have already thought. 40

Zar. Forgive my rage; I know thy love and truth.
But say, what's to be done, or when, or how,
Shall I prevent or stop th' approaching danger?

Sel. You must still seem more resolute and fix'd

On Osmyn's death; too quick a change of mercy
Might breed suspicion of the cause. Advise
That execution may be done in private.

Zar. On what pretence?

Sel. Your own request's enough.
However, for a colour, tell him, you
Have cause to fear his guards may be corrupted,
And some of them bought off to Osmyn's interest,
Who at the place of execution will
Attempt to force his way for an escape;
The state of things will countenance all suspicions.
Then offer to the king to have him strangled
In secret by your mutes; and get an order,
That none but mutes may have admittance to him.
I can no more, the king is here. Obtain
This grant, and I'll acquaint you with the rest. 60

Enter King, GONSALEZ, and PEREZ.

King. Bear to the dungeon those rebellious slaves,
"Th' ignoble curs that yelp to fill the cry,
"And spend their mouths in barking tyranny."
But for their leaders, Sancho and Ramirez,
Let 'em be lead away to present death.
Perez, see it perform'd.

Gons. Might I presume,
Their execution better were deferred,
'Till Osmyn die. Mean time we may learn more
Of this conspiracy.

King. Then be it so.
Stay, soldier; they shall suffer with the Moor.

Are none return'd of those who follow'd Heli?

Gons. None, sir. Some papers have been since discovered

In Roderigo's house, who fled with him,
Which seem'd to intimate, as if Alphonso
Were still alive, and arming in Valentia :
Which wears indeed this colour of a truth,
They who are fled have that way bent their course.
Of the same nature divers notes have been 80
Dispers'd t' amuse the people ; whereupon
Some, ready of belief, have rais'd this rumour :
That, being sav'd upon the coast of Afric,
He there disclos'd himself to Albucacim,
And, by a secret compact made with him,
Open'd and urg'd the way to this invasion ;
While he himself, returning to Valentia
In private, undertook to raise this tumult.

Zar. Hal hear'st thou that? Is Osmyn then Alphonso:

" Oh, heav'n! a thousand things occur at once
" To my remembrance now, that make it plain."

Oh, certain death for him, as sure despair
For me, if it be known——If not, what hope
Have I? Yet 'twere the lowest baseness now,
To yield him up—No, I will conceal him,
And try the force of yet more obligations.

Gons. 'Tis not impossible. Yet it may be
That some impostor has usurp'd his name.
Your beauteous captive Zara can inform,
If such a one, so 'scaping, was receiv'd, 100
At any time in Albucacim's court.

King. Pardon, fair excellence, this long neglect:
An unforeseen, unwelcome hour of business,
Has thrust between us and our while of love;
But wearing now apace with ebbing sand,
Will quickly waste and give again the day.

Zar. You're too secure: the danger is more imminent
Than your high courage suffers you to see;
While Osmyn lives, you are not safe.

King. His doom
Is pass'd, if you revoke it not, he dies.

Zar. 'Tis well. By what I heard upon your entrance,
I find I can unfold what yet concerns
You more. One, who did call himself Alphonso,
Was cast upon my coast, as 'tis reported,
And oft had private conference with the king;
To what effect I knew not then: but he,
Alphonso, secretly departed, just
About the time our arms embark'd for Spain.
What I know more is, that a triple league 120
Of strictest friendship was profest between
Alphonso, Heli, and the traitor Osmyn.

King. Public report is ratify'd in this.

Zar. And Osmyn's death requir'd of strong necessity.

King. Give order strait, that all the pris'ners die.

Zar. Forbear a moment, somewhat more I have
Worthy your private ear, and this your minister.

King. Let all, except Gonzalez, leave the room.

[Exit Perez, &c.]

Zar. I am your captive, and you've us'd me nobly;
And, in return of that, tho' otherwise

Your enemy, "I have discover'd Osmyn,
 "His private practice and conspiracy
 "Against your state: and, fully to discharge
 "Myself of what I've undertaken," now
 I think it fit to tell you, that your guards
 Are tainted; some among 'em have resolv'd
 To rescue Osmyn at the place of death.

King. Is treason then so near us as our guards?

Zar. Most certain; tho' my knowledge is not yet
 So ripe, to point at the particular men. 140

King. What's to be done?

Zar. That too I will advise.

I have remaining in my train some mutes,
 A present once from the sultana queen,
 In the grand signior's court. These from their infancy
 Are practis'd in the trade of death; and shall
 (As there the custom is) in private strangle
 Osmyn.

Gons. My lord, the queen advises well.

King. What off'ring, or what recompence remains
 In me, that can be worthy so great services?
 To cast beneath your feet the crown you've sav'd,
 Tho' on the head that wears it, were too little.

Zar. Of that hereafter: but, mean time, 'tis fit
 You give strict charge that none may be admitted
 To see the pris'ner, but such mutes as I
 Shall send.

King. Who waits there?

Enter PEREZ.

King. On your life, take heed

That only Zara's mutes, or such who bring
Her warrant, have admittance to the Moor. 16

Zar. They, and no other, not the princess' self.

Per. Your Majesty shall be obey'd.

King. Retire.

[*Exit Perez.*]

Gons. That interdiction so particular
Pronounc'd with vehemence against the princess,
Should have more meaning than appears barefac'd.
This king is blinded by his love, and heeds
It not. [*Aside.*—Your majesty sure might have spar'd
The last restraint: you hardly can suspect
The princess is confed'rate with the Moor.

Zar. I've heard her charity did once extend
So far, to visit him at his request.

Gons. Ha!

King. How! She visit Osmyn! What, my daughter?

Sel. Madam, take heed; or you have ruin'd all.

Zar. And after did solicit you on his
Behalf.—

King. Never. You have been misinform'd.

Zar. Indeed! Then 'twas a whisper spread by some
Who wish'd it so; a common art in courts, 181
I will retire and instantly prepare
Instruction for my ministers of death.

[*Exit Zara and Selim.*]

Gons. There's somewhat yet of mystery in this;
Her words and actions are obscure and double,
Sometimes concur, and sometimes disagree:
I like it not.

[*Aside.*]

King. What dost thou think, Gonsalez?

Are we not much indebted to this fair one ?

Gons. I am a little slow of credit, sir,
In the sincerity of women's actions.
Methinks this lady's hatred to the Moor
Disquiets her too much; which makes it seem
As if she'd rather that she did not hate him.
I wish her mutes are meant to be employ'd
As she pretends—I doubt it now—Your guards
Corrupted! How? By whom? Who told her so?
I' th' evening Osmyn was to die; at midnight
She begg'd the royal signet to release him;
I' th' morning he must die again; ere noon 200
Her mutes alone must strangle him, or he'll
Escape. This put together suits not well.

King. Yet that there's truth in what she has discover'd
Is manifest from every circumstance.
This tumult, and the lords who fled with Heli,
Are confirmation;—that Alphonso lives,
Agrees expressly too, with her report.

Gons. I grant it, sir; and doubt not, but in rage
Of jealousy, she has discover'd what
She now repents. It may be I'm deceiv'd.
But why that needless caution of the princess?
What if she had seen Osmyn? Tho' t'were strange;
But if she had, what was't to her? Unless
She fear'd her stronger charms might cause the Moor's
Affection to revolt.

King. I thank thee, friend.
There's reason in thy doubt, and I am warn'd.—
But think'st thou that my daughter saw this Moor?

Gons. If Osmyn be, as Zara has related,
Alphonso's friend, 'tis not impossible 220
But she might wish, on his account, to see him.

King. Say'st thou? By Heav'n, thou hast rous'd a
thought,

That like a sudden earthquake shakes my frame.
Confusion! then my daughter's an accomplice,
And plots in private with this hellish Moor.

Gons. That were too hard a thought—but see,
she comes—

'Twere not amiss to question her a little,
And try, how'er, if I've divin'd aright.
If what I fear be true, she'll be concern'd
For Osmyn's death, as he's Alphonso's friend:
Urge that, to try if she'll solicit for him.

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

King. Your coming has prevented me, Almeria;
I had determined to have sent for you.
Let your attendant be dismiss'd; I have

[*Leonora retires.*

To talk with you. Come near; why dost thou shake?
What mean those swell'd and red-fleck'd eyes, that look
As they had wept in blood, and worn the night
In waking anguish? Why this on the day
Which was design'd to celebrate thy nuptials;
But that the beams of light are to be stain'd 240
With reeking gore, from traitors on the rack?
Wherefore I have deferr'd the marriage-rites;
Nor shall the guilty horrors of this day
Prophane that jubilee.

Alm. All days to me
Henceforth are equal : this, the day of death,
To-morrow, and the next, and each that follows
Will undistinguish'd roll, and but prolong
One hated line of more extended woe.

King. Whence is thy grief? Give me to know the
cause ;

And look thou answer me with truth ; for know
I am not unacquainted with thy falshood.

Why art thou mute ? Base and degen'rate maid !

Gens. Dear madam, speak, or you'll incense the king.

Alm. What is't to speak ? Or wherefore should I
speak ?

What mean these tears but grief unutterable ?

King. They are the dumb confessions of thy
mind ;

They mean thy guilt, and say thou wert confed'rate
With damn'd conspirators to take my life.

Oh, impious parricide ! Now canst thou speak ? 260

Alm. O earth, behold, I kneel upon thy bosom,
And bend my flowing eyes to stream upon
Thy face, imploring thee that thou wilt yield ;
Open thy bowels of compassion, take
Into thy womb the last and most forlorn
Of all thy race. Hear me, thou common parent
—I have no parent else—be thou a mother,
And step between me and the curse of him
Who was—who was, but is no more a father ;
But brands my innocence with horrid crimes ;
And, for the tender names of child and daughter,

Now calls me murderer and parricide.

King. Rise, I command thee, rise—and if thou
wouldst

Acquit thyself of these detested names,
Swear thou hast never seen that foreign dog,
Now doom'd to die, that most accursed Osmyn.

Alm. Never, but as with innocence I might,
And free of all bad purposes. So Heaven's
My witness.

King. Vile equivocating wretch! 280

With innocence! Oh, patience! hear—she owns it!
Confesses it! By Heav'n, I'll have him rack'd,
Torn, mangled, flay'd, impal'd—all pains and tortures
That wit of man, or dire revenge can think,
Shall he, accumulated, underbear.

Alm. Oh, I am lost.—There fate begins to wound.

King. Hear me, then; if thou canst reply; know,
traitress,

I'm not to learn that curs'd Alphonso lives;
Nor am I ignorant what Osmyn is—

Alm. Then all is ended, and we both must die.
Since thou'rt reveal'd, alone thou shalt not die.
And yet alone would I have dy'd, Heav'n knows,
Repeated deaths, rather than have reveal'd thee.

“ Yes, all my father's wounding wrath, tho' each

“ Reproach cuts deeper than the keenest sword,

“ And cleaves my heart, I would have borne it all,

“ Nay all the pains that are prepar'd for thee;

“ To the remorseless rack I wou'd have giv'n

“ This weak and tender flesh, to have been bruise'd

"And torn, rather than have reveal'd thy being."

King. Hell, hell! Do I hear this, and yet endure!
What, dar'st thou to my face avow thy guilt?
Hence, ere I curse—fly my just rage with speed;
Lest I forget us both, and spurn thee from me.

Alm. And yet a father! Think, I am your child!
Turn not your eyes away—look on me kneeling;
Now curse me if you can, now spurn me off.
Did ever father curse his kneeling child?
Never; for always blessings crown that posture.

"Nature inclines, and half way meets that duty,
"Stooping to raise from earth the filial reverence;
"For bended knees returning folding arms,
"With pray'rs, and blessings, and paternal love."
Oh, hear me then, thus crawling on the earth—

King. Be thou advis'd, and let me go, while yet
The light impression thou hast made remains.

Alm. No, never will I rise, nor lose this hold.
'Till you are mov'd, and grant that he may live.

King. Ha! Who may live? Take heed! No more
of that;

For on my soul he dies, tho' thou and I, 320
And all should follow to partake his doom.
Away, off, let me go—Call her attendants.

[*Leonora and women return.*]

Alm. Drag me; and harrow the earth with my bare
bosom;

I will not go 'till you have spar'd my husband.

King. Ha! "What say'st thou?" Husband!

"Husband! damnation!

"What husband!" Which? Who?

Alm. He, he is my husband.

King. "Poison and daggers!" Who?

Alm. Oh——

[*Faints.*]

"*Gons.* Help, support her."

Alm. Let me go, let me fall, sink deep—I'll dig,
I'll dig a grave, and tear up death; "I will;

"I'll scrape, 'till I collect his rotten bones,

"And cloath their nakedness with my own flesh;"
Yes, I will strip off life, and we will change:

I will be death? then, tho' you kill my husband,
He shall be mine still, and for ever mine.

King. What husband? Whom dost thou mean?

Gons. She raves!

Alm. "Oh, that I did." Osmyn, he is my husband.

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King. Osmyn!

Alm. Not Osmyn, but Alphonso, is my dear
And wedded husband——Heav'n, and air, and seas,
Ye winds and waves, I call ye all to witness.

King. Wilder than winds or waves thyself dost
rave.

Should I hear more, I too should catch thy madness.

"Yet somewhat she must mean of dire import,

"Which I'll not hear, 'till I am more at peace."

Watch her returning sense, and bring me word;

And look that she attempt not on her life.

[*Exit King.*]

Alm. Oh, stay, yet stay; hear me, I am not mad.
I would to Heav'n I were——He's gone.

Gons. Have comfort.

Alm. Curs'd be that tongue that bids me be of comfort ;

Curs'd my own tongue, that could not move his pity ;
Curs'd these weak hands, that could not hold him
here ?

For he is gone to doom Alphonso's death.

Gons. Your too excessive grief works on your
fancy,

And deludes your sense. Alphonso, if living,
Is far from hence, beyond your father's pow'r. 360

Alm. Hence, thou detested, ill-tim'd flatterer ;
Source of my woes : thou and thy race be curs'd ;
But doubly thou, who couldst alone have policy
And fraud to find the fatal secret out,
And know that Osmyn was Alphonso.

Gons. Ha !

Alm. Why dost thou start ? What dost thou see or
hear ?

Was it the doleful bell, tolling for death ?
Or dying groans from my Alphonso's breast ?
See, see, look yonder ! where a grizzled, pale,
And ghastly head glares by, all smear'd with blood,
Gasping as it would speak ; and after, see,
Behold, a damp, dead hand has dropp'd a dagger :
I'll catch it—Hark ! a voice cries murder ! ah !
My father's voice ! hollow it sounds ; and calls
Me from the tomb—I'll follow it ; for there
I shall again behold my dear Alphonso.

[*Exeunt Almeria and Leonora.*]

Gons. She's greatly griev'd; nor am I less surpriz'd.
 Osmyn, Alphonso! No; she over-rates
 My policy; I ne'er suspected it; 380
 Nor now had known it, but from her mistake.
 Her husband too! Ha! Where is Garcia then?
 And where the crown that should descend on him,
 To grace the line of my posterity?
 Hold, let me think—if I should tell the king—
 Things come to this extremity: his daughter
 Wedded already—what if he should yield?
 Knowing no remedy for what is past,
 And urg'd by nature pleading for his child,
 With which he seems to be already shaken.
 And tho' I know he hates beyond the grave
 Anselmo's race; yet if—that If concludes me.
 To doubt, when I may be assur'd, is folly.
 But how prevent the captive queen, who means
 To set him free? Ay, now 'tis plain. O well
 Invented tale! He was Alphonso's friend.
 This subtle woman will amuse the king.
 If I delay—'twill do—or better so.
 One to my wish. Alonzo thou art welcome.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. The king expects your lordship. 400
Gons. 'Tis no matter.
 I'm not i' the way at present, good Alonzo.
Alon. If 't please your lordship, I'll return, and say
 I have not seen you.

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Gons. Do, my best Alonzo,
Yet stay, I would—but go; anon will serve—
Yet I have that requires thy speedy help.
I think thou would'st not stop to do me service.

Alon. I am your creature.

Gons. Say thou art my friend.
I've seen thy sword do noble execution.

Alon. All that it can your lordship shall command.

Gons. Thanks; and I take thee at thy word. Thou'st
seen,

Amongst the followers of the captive queen,
Dumb men, who make their meaning known by signs,

Alon. I have, my lord.

Gons. Could'st thou procure, with speed
And privacy, the wearing garb of one
Of those, tho' purchas'd by his death, I'd give
Thee such reward, as should exceed thy wish. 420

Alon. Conclude it done. Where shall I wait your
lordship?

Gons. At my apartment. Use thy utmost diligence;
And say I've not been seen—Haste, good Alonzo.

[Exit Alonzo.]

So, this can hardly fail. Alphonso slain,
The greatest obstacle is then remov'd.
Almeria widow'd, yet again may wed;
And I yet fix the crown on Garcia's head.

[Exit.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

A room of State. Enter KING, PEREZ, and ALONZO.

King.

NOT to be found! In an ill hour he's absent.

None, say you? none! What, not the fav'rite eunuch?

Nor she herself, nor any of her mutes,
Have yet requir'd admittance?

Per. None, my lord.

King. Is Osmyn so dispos'd as I commanded?

Per. Fast bound in double chains, and at full length
He lies supine on earth; with as much ease
She might remove the centre of this earth,
As loose the rivets of his bonds,

King. 'Tis well.

[A mute appears, and seeing the king, retires.]

Ha! stop, and seize that mute; Alonzo, follow him.
Ent'ring he met my eyes, and starting back,
Frighted, and fumbling, one hand in his bosom,
As to conceal th'importance of his errand.

[Alonzo follows him and returns with a paper.]

Alon. A bloody proof of obstinate fidelity!

King. What dost thou mean?

Alon. Soon as I seiz'd the man,

He snatch'd from out his bosom this—and strove
With rash and greedy haste, at once, to cram 20
The morsel down his throat. I caught his arm,

And hardly wrench'd his hand to wring it from him ;
Which done, he drew a poignard from his side,
And on the instant plung'd it in his breast.

King. Remove the body thence, ere Zara see it.

Alon. I'll be so bold to borrow his attire ;

'Twill quit me of my promise to Gonzalez. [*Aside. Ex.*

" *Per.* Whate'er it is, the king's complexion turns."

King. How's this ? My mortal foe beneath my roof!

[*Having read the letter.*

Oh, give me patience, all ye powers ! No, rather
Give me new rage, implacable revenge,
And trebled fury—Ha ! who's there ?

Per. My lord.

King. Hence, slave ! how dar'st thou bide to watch
and pry

Into how poor a thing a king descends,
How like thyself, when passion treads him down ?
Ha ! stir not, on thy life ; for thou wert fix'd,
And planted here, to see me gorge this bait,
And lash against the hook—By Heav'n, you're all
Rank traitors ! thou art with the rest combin'd : 40
Thou knew'st that Osmyn was Alphonso ; knew'st
My daughter privately with him conferr'd ;
And wert the spy and pander to their meeting.

Per. By all that's holy, I'm amaz'd—

King. Thou ly'st.

Thou art accomplice too with Zara ; here
Where she sets down—*Still will I set thee free*—[*Reading.*
That somewhere is repeated—*I have power*
O'er them that are thy guards—Mark that, thou traitor.

Per. It was your majesty's command I should
Obey her order.——

King. [Reading.]—— *And still will I set
Thee free, Alphonso*——Hell! curs'd, curs'd Alphonso!
False and perfidious Zara! Strumpet daughter!
Away, begone, thou feeble boy, fond love;
All nature, softness, pity and compassion,
This hour I throw ye off, and entertain
Fell hate within my breast, revenge and gall.
By Heav'n, I'll meet, and counterwork this treachery.
Hark thee, villain, traitor—answer me, slave. 60

Per. My service has not merited those titles.

King. Dar'st thou reply? "Take that"—thy ser-
vice! thine! " [Strikes him.

What's thy whole life, thy soul, thy all, to my
One moment's ease? Hear my command; and look
That thou obey, or horror on thy head:
Drench me thy dagger in Alphonso's heart.
Why dost thou start? Resolve, or——

Per. Sir, I will.

King. 'Tis well—that when she comes to set him
free,

His teeth may grin, and mock at her remorse.

[Perez going.

—Stay thee—I've farther thought—I'll add to this,
And give her eyes yet greater disappointment:
When thou hast ended him, bring me his robe;
And let the cell where she'll expect to see him
Be darken'd, so as to amuse the sight.
I'll be conducted thither—mark me well——

There with his turban, and his robe array'd,
 And laid along, as he now lies, supine,
 I shall convict her, to her face, of falshood.
 When for Alphonso's she shall take my hand, 80
 And breathe her sighs upon my lips for his;
 Sudden I'll start and dash her with her guilt.
 But see, she comes. I'll shun th' encounter; thou
 Follow me, and give heed to my direction. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zar. "The mute not yet return'd!" ha! 'twas the
 king,
 The king that parted hence! frowning he went;
 "His eyes like meteors roll'd, then darted down
 "Their red and angry beams; as if his sight
 "Would, like the raging dog-star, scorch the earth,
 "And kindle ruin in its course:" Dost think
 He saw me?

Sel. Yes: but then, as if he thought
 His eyes had err'd, he hastily recall'd
 Th' imperfect look, and sternly turn'd away.

Zar. Shun me when seen! I fear thou hast undone
 me.

"Thy shallow artifice begets suspicion,
 "And like a cobweb veil, but thinly shades
 "The face of thy design! alone disguising
 "What should have ne'er been seen; imperfect
 "mischief!
 "Thou, like the adder, venomous and deaf, 100
 "Hast stung the traveller, and after hear'st

" Not his pursuing voice; e'en when thou think'st
 " To hide, the rustling leaves and bended grass
 " Confess and point the path which thou hast crept.
 " Oh, fate of fools! officious in contriving;
 " In executing, puzzled, lame, and lost."

Sel. Avert it Heav'n, that you should ever suffer
 For my defect; or that the means which I
 Devis'd to serve, should ruin your design.
 Prescience is Heav'n's alone, not giv'n to man,
 If I have fail'd, in what, as being man,
 I needs must fail; impute not as a crime
 My nature's want, but punish nature in me;
 I plead not for a pardon, and to live,
 But to be punish'd and forgiven. Here, strike;
 I bare my breast to meet your just revenge.

Zar. I have not leisure now to take so poor
 A forfeit as thy life; somewhat of high
 And more important fate requires my thought.
 " When I've concluded on myself, if I 120
 " Think fit, I'll leave thee my command to die."
 Regard me well; and dare not to reply
 To what I give in charge; for I'm resolv'd.
 Give order that the two remaining mutes
 Attend me instantly, with each a bowl
 Of such ingredients mix'd, as will with speed
 Benumb the living faculties, and give
 Most easy and inevitable death.
 Yes, Osmyn, yes; be Osmyn or Alphonso,
 I'll give thee freedom, if thou dar'st be free:
 Such liberty as I embrace myself,

Thou shalt partake. Since fates no more afford ;
I can but die with thee, to keep my word. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Opening, shews the Prison. Enter GONSALEZ disguised like a Mute, with a Dagger.

Gons. Nor centinel, nor guard ! the doors unbarr'd !
And all as still, as at the noon of night !
Sure death already has been busy here.
There lies my way ; that door too is unlock'd.

[*Looking in.*]

Ha ! sure he sleeps—all's dark within, save what
A lamp, that feebly lifts a sickly flame,
By fits reveals—his face seems turn'd, to favour 140
Th' attempt : I'll steal and do it unperceiv'd.
What noise ! somebody coming ? i'st Alonzo ?
Nobody. Sure he'll wait without—I would
'Twere done—I'll crawl, and sting him to the heart,
Then cast my skin, and leave it there to answer it.

[*Goes in.*]

Enter GARCIA and ALONZO.

Gar. Where, where, Alonzo, where's my father ?
where

The king ? Confusion ! all is on the rout !
All's lost, all ruin'd by surprize and treachery.
Where, where is he ! Why dost thou mislead me ?
Alon. My lord, he enter'd but a moment since,

And could not pass me unperceiv'd—What hoa!
My lord, my lord! What hoa! my lord Gonzalez!

Enter GONSALEZ bloody.

Gons. Perdition choak your clamours—whence this
rudeness?

Garcia!

Gar. Perdition, slavery, and death,
Are entering now our doors. Where is the king?
What means this blood; and why this face of horror?

Gons. No matter—give me first to know the cause
Of these your rash, and ill-tim'd exclamations.

Gar. The eastern gate is to the foe betray'd,
Who, but for heaps of slain that choak the passage,
Had enter'd long ere now, and borne down all
Before 'em, to the palace walls. Unless
The king in person animate our men,
Granada's lost; and to confirm this fear,
The traitor Perez, and the captive Moor,
Are through a postern fled, and join'd the foe.

Gons. Would all were false as that; for whom you
call

The Moor, is dead. That Osmyn was Alphonso;
In whose heart's blood this poignard yet is warm.

Gar. Impossible; for Osmyn was, while flying,
Pronounc'd aloud by Perez for Alphonso.

Gons. Enter that chamber, and convince your eyes,
How much report has wrong'd your easy faith.

[Garcia goes in.]

Alon. My lord, for certain truth, Perez is fled;

And has declar'd, the cause of his revolt
Was to revenge a blow the king had given him.

Gar. [*Returning.*] Ruin and horror! Oh, heart-
wounding sight!

Gons. What says my son? What ruin? Ha! what
horror?

Gar. Blasted my eyes, and speechless be my tongue,
Rather than or to see, or to relate
This deed—Oh, dire mistake! Oh, fatal blow!
The king——

Gons. Alon. The king!

Gar. Dead, welt'ring, drown'd in blood.
See, see, attir'd like Osmyn, where he lies.

[*They look in.*]

Oh, whence, or how, or wherefore was this done?
But what imports the manner or the cause?
Nothing remains to do, or to require,
But that we all should turn our swords against
Ourselves, and expiate with our own, his blood.

Gons. Oh, wretch! Oh, cursed rash deluded fool!
On me, on me turn your avenging swords.
I, who have spilt my royal master's blood,
Should make atonement by a death as horrid,
And fall beneath the hand of my own son.

Gar. Ha! what! atone this murder with a greater!
The horror of that thought has damp'd my rage.
“The earth already groans to bear this deed;
“Oppress her not, nor think to stain her face
“With more unnatural blood. Murder my father!
“Better with this to rip up my own bowels,

" And bathe it to the hilt, in far less damnable
" Self-murder."

Gons. Oh, my son! from the blind dotage
Of a father's fondness these ills arose.
For thee I've been ambitious, base, and bloody:
For thee I've plung'd into this sea of sin;
Stemming the tide with only one weak hand,
While t'other bore the crown (to wreath thy brow)
Whose weight has sunk me, ere I reach'd the shore.

Gar. Fatal ambition! Hark! the foe is enter'd:

[*Shout.*

The shrillness of that shout speaks them at hand.

" We have no time to search into the cause

" Of this surprising and most fatal error.

" What's to be done? the king's death known, would
strike

" The few remaining soldiers with despair,

" And make them yield to mercy of the conqueror."

Alon. My lord, I've thought how to conceal the
body.

Require me not to tell the means, till done,
Lest you forbid what you may then approve.

[*Goes in. Shout.*

Gons. They shout again! Whate'er he means to do,
'Twere fit the soldiers were amus'd with hopes;
And in the mean time fed with expectation
To see the king in person at their head.

Gar. Were it a truth, I fear 'tis now too late.
But I'll omit no care, nor haste! and try,
Or to repel their force, or bravely die. [*Exit Garcia.*

Re-enter ALONZO.

Gons. What hast thou done, Alonzo?

Alon. Such a deed,

As but an hour ago I'd not have done,
Though for the crown of universal empire.
But what are kings reduc'd to common clay?
Or who can wound the dead?—I've from the body
Sever'd the head, and in an obscure corner
Dispos'd it, muffled in the mute's attire,
Leaving to view of them who enter next,
Alone the undistinguishable trunk:
Which may be still mistaken by the guards
For Osmyn, if in seeking for the king,
They chance to find it.

Gons. 'Twas an act of horror;
And of a piece with this day's dire misdeeds.
But 'tis no time to ponder or repent.
Haste thee, Alonzo, haste thee hence with speed,
To aid my son. I'll follow with the last
Reserve, to reinforce his arms: at least,
I shall make good and shelter his retreat.

[Exeunt severally.]

Enter ZARA, followed by SELIM, and two Mutes bearing the bowls.

Zar. Silence and solitude are every where.
Through all the gloomy ways and iron doors
That hither lead, nor human face nor voice
Is seen or heard. "A dreadful din was wont

" To grate the sense, when enter'd here, from groans
 " And howls of slaves condemn'd; from clink of
 chains,

" And crash of rusty bars and creaking hinges :

" And ever and anon the sight was dash'd

" With frightful faces, and the meagre looks

" Of grim and ghastly executioners.

" Yet more this stillness terrifies my soul,

" Than did that scene of complicated horrors.

" It may be that the cause of this my errand

" And purpose, being changed from life to death,

" Had also wrought this chilling change of temper.

" Or does my heart bode more ? What can it more

" Than death ?"

Let 'em set down the bowls, and warn Alphonso

That I am here—so. You return and find

[*Mutes going in.*]

The king ; tell him, what he requir'd, I've done,

And wait his coming to approve the deed.

[*Exit Selim*]

Enter Mutes.

Zar. What have you seen ? Ha ! wherefore stare
 you thus [*The mutes return and look affrighted.*]

With haggard eyes ? Why are your arms across ?

Your heavy and desponding heads hung down ?

Why is't you more than speak in these sad signs ?

Give me more ample knowledge of this mourning.

[*They go to the scene, which opening, she
 perceives the body.*]

Ha! prostrate! bloody! headless! Oh—I'm lost.
 Oh, Osmyn! Oh, Alphonso! Cruel fate!
 Cruel, cruel, Oh, more than killing object!
 I came prepar'd to die, and see thee die—
 Nay, came prepar'd myself to give thee death—
 But cannot bear to find thee thus, my Osmyn—
 Oh, this accurs'd, this base, this treach'rous king!

Enter SELIM.

Sel. I've sought in vain, for no where can the king
 Be found——

Zar. Get thee to hell, and seek him there.

[Stabs him.]

His hellish rage had wanted means to act,
 But for thy fatal and pernicious counsel.

Sel. You thought it better then—but I'm rewarded.
 The mute you sent, by some mischance was seen,
 And forc'd to yield your letter with his life;
 I found the dead and bloody body stripp'd——
 My tongue falters, and my voice fails—I sink——
 Drink not the poison—for Alphonso is—— *[Dies.]*

Zar. As thou art now—and I shall quickly be.
 'Tis not that he is dead: for 'twas decreed
 We both should die. Nor is't that I survive;
 I have a certain remedy for that.
 But, Oh, he dy'd unknowing in my heart.
 He knew I lov'd, but knew not to what height:
 Nor that I meant to fall before his eyes,
 A martyr and a victim to my vows.
 Insensible of this last proof he's gone;

" Yet fate alone can rob his mortal part
 " Of sense ? his soul still sees and knows each purpose,
 " And fix'd event, of my persisting faith."
 Then wherefore do I pause ? Give me the bowl.

[A mute kneels and gives one of the bowls.]

Hover a moment, yet, thou gentle spirit,
 Soul of my love, and I will wait thy flight.
 This to our mutual bliss, when join'd above. *[Drinks.]*
 Oh, friendly draught, already in my heart.
 Cold, cold ; my veins are icicles and frost.
 I'll creep into his bosom, lay me there ;
 Cover us close—or I shall chill his breast,
 And fright him from my arms—See, see, he slides
 Still farther from me ; look, he hides his face,
 I cannot feel it—quite beyond my reach,—
 Oh, now he's gone, and all is dark— *[Dies.]*

[The mutes kneel and mourn over her.]

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Alm. Oh, let me seek him in this horrid cell ;
 For in the tomb, or prison, I alone
 Must hope to find him.

Leon. Heavens ! what dismal scene
 Of death is this ? The eunuch Selim slain !

Alm. Shew me, for I am come in search of death ;
 But want a guide ; for tears have dimm'd my sight

Leon. Alas, a little farther, and behold
 Zara all pale and dead ! two frightful men,
 Who seem the murderers, kneel weeping by ;
 Feeling remorse too late for what they've done.

But, Oh, forbear—lift up your eyes no more ;
 But haste away, fly from this fatal place,
 Where miseries are multiply'd ; return,
 Return, and look not on ; for there's a dagger
 Ready to stab the sight, and make your eyes
 Rain blood——

Alm. Oh, I foreknow, foresee that object.
 Is it at last then so ? Is he then dead ?
 “ What, dead at last ? quite, quite, for ever dead ?
 “ There, there, I see him ; there he lies, the blood
 “ Yet bubbling from his wounds—Oh, more than sa-
 vage !
 “ Had they or hearts or eyes that did this deed ?
 “ Could eyes endure to guide such cruel hands ?
 “ Are not my eyes guilty alike with theirs,
 “ That thus can gaze, and yet not turn to stone ?
 ——I do not weep ! The springs of tears are dry'd ;
 And of a sudden I am calm, as if
 All things were well ; and yet my husband's murder'd !
 Yes, yes, I know to mourn ! I'll sluice this heart,
 The source of woe, and let the torrent loose.
 ——Those men have left to weep ! they look on me !
 I hope they murder all on whom they look.
 Behold me well ; your bloody hands have err'd,
 And wrongfully have slain those innocents :
 I am the sacrifice design'd to bleed,
 And come prepar'd to yield my throat——They shake
 Their heads in sign of grief and innocence !
 [*They point at the bowl on the ground.*]
 And point ! What mean they ? Ha ! a cup ; Oh, well

I understand what med'cine has been here.

Oh, noble thirst! yet greedy to drink all——

——Oh, for another draught of death——“ What mean they? [*They point at the other cup.*]

“ Ha! point again!” ’tis there, and full, I hope.

Thanks to the lib’ral hand that fill’d thee thus,

I’ll drink my glad acknowledgment——

Leon. Oh, hold

For mercy’s sake, upon my knee I beg——

Alm. With thee the kneeling world should beg in vain.

Seest thou not there? Behold who prostrate lies,

And pleads against thee; who shall then prevail?

Yet I will take a cold and parting leave

From his pale lips; I’ll kiss him ere I drink,

Lest the rank juice should blister on my mouth,

And stain the colour of my last adieu.

Horror! a headless trunk! nor lips nor face,

[*Coming near the body, starts and lets fall the cup.*]

But spouting veins, and mangled flesh! Oh, Oh!

Enter ALPHONSO, HELI, PEREZ, with GARCIA prisoner.

Guards and attendants.

Alph. Away, stand off, where is she? let me fly,
Save her from death, and snatch her to my heart.

Alm. Oh!

Alph. Forbear; my arms alone shall hold her up,
Warm her to life, and wake her into gladness.

“ Oh, let me talk to thy reviving sense

“ The words of joy and peace; warm thy cold beauties

“ With the new flushing ardour of my cheek ;
“ Into thy lips pour the soft trickling balm
“ Of cordial sighs ; and reinspire thy bosom
“ With the breath of love. Shine, awake, Almeria,
Give a new birth to thy long-shaded eyes,
Then double on the day reflected light.

Alm. Where am I ? Heav’n ! what does this dream intend ?

Alph. Oh, may’st thou never dream of less delight,
Nor ever wake to less substantial joys.

Alm. Giv’n me again from death ! Oh, all ye pow’rs,
Confirm this miracle ! Can I believe
My sight “ against my sight ? and shall I trust
“ That sense, which in one instant shews him dead
“ And living ? ”—Yes, I will ; I’ve been abus’d
With apparitions and affrighting phantoms :
This is my lord, my life, my only husband,
I have him now, and we no more will part.
My father, too, shall have compassion—

Alph. Oh, my heart’s comfort ; ’tis not giv’n to this
Frail life to be entirely bless’d. E’en now,
In this extremest joy my soul can taste,
Yet I am dash’d to think that thou must weep ;
Thy father fell where he design’d my death.
Gonsalez and Alonzo, both of wounds
Expiring, have, with their last breath, confess’d
The just decrees of Heav’n, which on themselves
Has turn’d their own most bloody purposes.
Nay, I must grant, ’tis fit you should be thus—

[*She weeps.*]

"Let 'em remove the body from her sight."

Ill-fated Zara! Ha! a cup! Alas!

Thy error then is plain! but I were flint
Not to o'erflow in tribute to thy memory.

Oh, Garcia! —

Whose virtue has renounc'd thy father's crimes,
Seest thou how just the hand of Heav'n has been?

Let us, who through our innocence survive,

Still in the paths of honour persevere,

And not from past or present ills despair;

For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds;

And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by ALMERIA.

THE tragedy thus done, I am, you know,

No more a princess, but in statu quo;

And now as unconcern'd this mourning wear,

As if indeed a widow or an heir.

I've leisure, now, to mark your sev'ral faces,

And know each critic by his sour grimaces.

To poison plays, I see them where they sit,

Scatter'd, like ratsbane, up and down the pit;

While others watch, like parish searchers hir'd,

To tell of what disease the play expir'd.

Oh, with what joy they run to spread the news

Of a damn'd poet and departed muse!

*But if he 'scape, with what regret they're seiz'd!
And how they're disappointed, when they're pleas'd!
Critics to plays for the same end resort,
That surgeons wait on trials in a court:
For innocence condemn'd they've no respect,
Provided they've a body to dissect.
As Sussex men, that dwell upon the shore,
Look out when storms arise, and billows roar,
Devoutly praying, with uplifted hands,
That some well-laden ship may strike the sands,
To whose rich cargo they may make pretence,
And fatten on the spoils of Providence:
So critics throng to see a new play split,
And thrive and prosper on the wrecks of wit.
Small hope our poet from these prospects draws;
And therefore to the fair commends his cause.
Your tender hearts to mercy are inclin'd,
With whom he hopes this play will favour find,
Which was an off'ring to the sex design'd.*

7 JU 52



7. II 52



By W. D. G. Pinet

Engr. by S. G. G.

M^{rs} S. KEMPLE as IMOINDA.

*There's something in that name, that voice that face—
 'Tis if I know myself, I cannot be mistaken.*

London, Printed by J. Bell, British Library, Strand, Coffin-ways.



Hamilton pinxt

J. Smith sculp

London Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand, Nov. 12. 1791.

7 JU 52

OROONOKO.

A

TRAGEDY,

BY THOMAS SOUTHERN.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of JOHN BELL,

British Library, STRAND,

Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

M DCC XCI.



OROONOKO

WAS written by THOMAS SOUTHERN, of whom more will be said when we arrive at his most admired Play, ISABELLA.

OROONOKO is a Tragedy with a mixture of low character, perhaps too gross for the modern habits of the Stage, though I think Nature would not barely acknowledge their persons, but approve also of their situations.

At Liverpool it may be imagined this play cannot easily be popular——It ought to be itself the death blow to that most infernal of all commerce, the traffic of our Fellow Creatures——

Raised by the happy progress of cultivation to superior powers of mind, there is no reason, that is not sordid, for our violating the native liberties of Man even in a Savage State.—Barren as the Slave may be of all the trickeries upon which we value ourselves, and to our eye degraded by the unsightly opposition of his colour, he possesses feelings which it is tyranny to wound, and importance which it is treason to annihilate.—He has also resentments vivid, keen, and implacable, which, if we provoke by cruelty, as well as fraud, he drags a life of torment only in the hope to exercise in vengeance.

The distresses of OROONOKO and IMOINDA are powerful Appeals to the Heart, and the character of the Prince offers a fine scope to the grander requisites of the Performer.—

ABOAN, shocking as his appearance is, works up the feelings of the Spectator by irresistible nature, and the claims of fidelity lacerated and expiring, that bears him to his MASTER, and bears him *but* to DIE.

The Scoundrels about these sacrifices are such as we fear even a British settlement now can easily supply.

PROLOGUE.

*AS when, in hostile times, two neighbouring states
Strive by themselves and their confederates:
The war at first is made with awkward skill,
And soldiers clumsily each other kill;
Till time, at length, their untaught fury tames,
And into rules their heedless rage reclaims:
Then ev'ry science by degrees is made
Subservient to the man-destroying trade:
Wit, wisdom, reading, observation, art;
A well-turn'd head to guide a gen'rous heart.
So it may prove with our contending stages,
If you will kindly but supply their wages;
Which you, with ease, may furnish, by retrenching
Your superfluities of wine and wenching.
Who'd grudge to spare from riot and hard drinking,
To lay it out on means to mend his thinking?
To follow such advice you should have leisure;
Since what refines your sense refines your pleasure.
Women grown tame by use, each fool can get;
But cuckolds all are made by men of wit.
To virgin favours fools have no pretence:
For maidenheads were made for men of sense.
'Tis not enough to have a horse well bred,
To shew his mettle he must be well fed;
Nor is it all in provender and breed,
He must be try'd, and strain'd, to mend his speed.
A favour'd poet, like a pamper'd horse,
Will strain his eye-balls out to win the course.*

*Do you but in your wisdom vote it fit,
To yield due succours to this war of wit,
The buskins with more grace should tread the stage,
Love sigh in softer strains, heroes less rage;
Satire shall shew a triple row of teeth,
And Comedy shall laugh your fops to death:
Wit shall refine, and Pegasus shall foam,
And soar in search of ancient Greece and Rome.
And since the nation's in the conqu'ring fit,
As you by arms, we'll conquer France in wit.
The work were over, could our poets write
With half the spirit that our soldiers fight.*

Dramatis Personæ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

ABOAN, - - - - -	Mr. Bensley,
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, - - - - -	Mr. Whitfield.
ORONOKO, - - - - -	Mr. Kemble.
BLANDFORD, - - - - -	Mr. Barrymore.
HOTMAN, - - - - -	Mr. Williames.
STANMORE, - - - - -	Mr. R. Palmer.
J. STANMORE, - - - - -	Mr. Benson.
DANIEL, - - - - -	Mr. Suet.
Captain DRIVER, - - - - -	Mr. Maddox.

Women.

Widow LACKIT, - - - - -	Mrs. Hopkins.
CHARLOTTE WELLDON, - - - - -	Mrs. Goodall,
LUCY WELLDON, - - - - -	Miss Collins.
IMOINDA, - - - - -	Miss Powell.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

ABOAN, - - - - -	Mr. Aickin.
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, - - - - -	Mr. Davies.
ORONOKO, - - - - -	Mr. Pope.
BLANDFORD, - - - - -	Mr. Hull.
HOTMAN, - - - - -	Mr. Thompson.
STANMORE, - - - - -	Mr. Cubit.
J. STANMORE, - - - - -	Mr. Mackready.
DANIEL, - - - - -	Mr. Quick.
Captain DRIVER, - - - - -	Mr. Fearon.

Women.

Widow LACKIT, - - - - -	Mrs. Webb.
CHARLOTTE WELLDON, - - - - -	Mrs. Bernard.
LUCY WELLDON, - - - - -	Mrs. Lewis.
IMOINDA, - - - - -	Mrs. Pope.

Planters, Indians, Negroes, men, women, and children.

SCENE, Surinam, a colony in the West-Indies, at the times of the action
of this Tragedy in the possession of the English.



OROONOKO.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter WELLDON following LUCY.

Lucy.

WHAT will this come to? What can it end in? you have persuaded me to leave dear England, and dearer London, the place of the world most worthy living in, to follow you a husband hunting into America: I thought husbands grew in these plantations.

Well. Why so they do, as thick as oranges ripening one under another. Week after week they drop into some woman's mouth: 'tis but a little patience, spreading your apron in expectation, and one of 'em will fall into your lap at last.

Luc. Ay, so you say, indeed. 10

Well. But you have left dear London, you say: pray what have you left in London that was very dear to you, that had not left you before?

Luc. Speak for yourself, sister.

Well. Nay, I'll keep you in countenance. The young fellows, you know, the dearest part of the town, and without whom London had been a wilderness to you and me, had forsaken us a great while. 18

Luc. Forsaken us? I don't know that ever they had us.

Well. Forsaken us the worst way, child; that is, did not think us worth having; they neglected us, no longer designed upon us, they were tired of us. Women in London are like the rich silks, they are out of fashion a great while before they wear out—

Luc. The devil take the fashion, I say.

25

Well. You may tumble them over and over at their first coming up, and never disparage their price; but they fall upon wearing immediately, lower and lower in their value, till they come to the broker at last.

Luc. Ay, ay, that's the merchant they deal with.
 " The men would have us at their own scandalous rates;
 " their plenty makes them wanton, and in a little time, I
 " suppose, they won't know what they would have of the
 " women themselves.

34

Well. Oh, yes, they know what they would have. They
 " would have a woman give the town a pattern of her per-
 " son and beauty, and not stay in it so long to have the
 " whole piece worn out. They would have the good face
 " only discovered, and not the folly that commonly goes
 " along with it. They say there is a vast stock of beauty in
 " the nation, but a great part of it lies in unprofitable
 " hands; therefore, for the good of the public, they would
 " have a draught made once a quarter, send the decaying
 " beauties for breeders into the country, to make room for
 " new faces to appear, to countenance the pleasures of the
 " town.

Luc. 'Tis very hard, the men must be young as long as
 " they live, and poor women be thought decaying and unfit
 " for the town at one and twenty. I'm sure we were not
 " seven years in London.

50

Well. Not half the time taken notice of, sister. The
 " two or three last years we could make nothing of it, even

“ in a vizard-mask ; not in a vizard-mask, that has cheated
 “ many a man into an old acquaintance. Our faces began
 “ to be as familiar to the men of intrigue as their duns, and
 “ as much avoided. We durst not appear in public places,
 “ and were almost grudged a gallery in the churches : even
 “ there they had their jests upon us, and cry’d, she’s in the
 “ right on’t, good gentlewoman, since no man considers her
 “ body, she does very well indeed to take care of her soul.

“ *Luc.* Such unmannerly fellows there will always be.

“ *Well.* Then you may remember we were reduced to the last
 “ necessity, the necessity of making silly visits to our civil ac-
 “ quaintance, to bring us into tolerable company. Nay, the
 “ young inns of court beaus, of but one term’s standing in the
 “ fashion, who knew nobody, but as they were shewn them
 “ by the orange woman, had nick names for us : how often
 “ they laughed out, there goes my landlady ; is she not
 “ come to let lodgings yet ?

“ *Luc.* Young coxcombs that knew no better. 70

“ *Well.* And that we must have come to. For your part,
 “ what trade could you set up in ? You would never arrive
 “ at the trust and credit of a guinea-bawd ; you would have
 “ too much business of your own ever to mind other peo-
 “ ple’s.

“ *Luc.* That is true, indeed.

“ *Well.* Then, as a certain sign that there was nothing
 “ more to be hoped for, the maids of the chocolate-houses
 “ found us out, and laughed at us : our billet-doux lay there
 “ neglected for waste-paper ; we were cry’d down so low, we
 “ could not pass upon the city ; and became so notorious in
 “ our galloping way, from one end of the town to t’other,
 “ that at last we could hardly compass a competent change
 “ of petticoats to disguise us to the hackney coachmen : and
 “ then it was near walking a foot indeed. 85

Luc. Nay, that I began to be afraid of.

Well. To prevent which, with what youth and beauty were left, some experience, and the small remainder of fifteen hundred pounds a-piece, which amounted to bare two hundred between us both, I persuaded you to bring your person for a venture to the Indies. Every thing has succeeded in our voyage: I pass for your brother: one of the richest planters here happening to die just as we landed, I have claimed kindred with him: so, without making his will, he has left us the credit of his relation to trade upon: "we pass for his cousins, coming here to Surinam chiefly upon his invitation;" we live in reputation; have the best acquaintance in the place; and we shall find our account in't, I warrant you.

Luc. I must rely upon you.—

100

Enter Widow LACKITT.

Wid. Mr. Welldon, your servant. Your servant, Mrs. Lucy, I am an ill visitor, but 'tis not too late, I hope, to bid you welcome to this side of the world. [*Salutes Lucy.*]

Well. Gad so, I beg your pardon, widow, I should have done the civilities of my house before; but, as you say, 'tis not too late, I hope— [*Going to kiss her.*]

Wid. What! you think now this was a civil way of begging a kiss; and, by my troth, if it were, I see no harm in it; 'tis a pitiful favour indeed that is not worth asking for: though I have known a woman speak plainer before now, and not understood neither.

111

Well. Not under my roof. Have at you, widow.

Wid. Why that's well said, spoke like a younger brother, that deserves to have a widow.—[*He kisses her.*] You're a younger brother I know by your kissing.

Well. How so, pray

Wid. Why, you kiss as if you expected to be paid for't. You have bird-lime upon your lips. You stick so close, there's no getting rid of you.

Well. I am a-kin to a younger brother. 120

Wid. So much the better : we widows are commonly the better for younger brothers.

Luc. Better or worse, most of you. But you won't be much the better for him, I can tell you.— [Aside.

Well. I was a younger brother ; but an uncle of my mother's has maliciously left me an estate, and, I'm afraid, spoiled my fortune.

Wid. No, no ; an estate will never spoil your fortune ; I have a good estate myself, thank Heaven, and a kind husband that left it behind him. 130

Well. Thank Heaven that took him away from it, widow, and left you behind him.

Wid. Nay, Heaven's will must be done ; he's in a better place.

Well. A better place for you, no doubt on't : now you may look about you ; choose for yourself, Mrs. Lackitt, that's your business ; for I know you design to marry again.

Wid. Oh, dear ! not I, I protest and swear ; I don't design it : but I won't swear, neither ; one does not know what may happen to tempt one. 140

Well. Why a lusty young fellow may happen to tempt you.

Wid. Nay, I'll do nothing rashly : I'll resolve against nothing. The devil, they say, is very busy upon these occasions, especially with the widows. But, if I am to be tempted, it must be with a young man, I promise you—Mrs. Lucy, your brother is a very pleasant gentleman : I came about business to him, but he turns every thing into merriment.

Well. Business, Mrs. Lackitt ? then I know, you would have me to yourself. Pray, leave us together, sister. [Exit Lucy.] What am I drawing upon myself here ? [Aside.

Wid. You have taken a very pretty house here; every thing so neat about you already. I hear you are laying out for a plantation.

Well. Why, yes, truly, I like the country, and would buy a plantation, if I could reasonably.

Wid. Oh, by all means reasonably.

Well. If I could have one to my mind, I would think of settling among you.

Wid. Oh, you can't do better. Indeed we can't pretend to have so good company for you, as you had in England; but we shall make very much of you. For my own part, I assure you, I shall think myself very happy to be more particularly known to you. 158

Well. Dear Mrs. Lackitt, you do me too much honour.

Wid. Then as to a plantation, Mr. Welldon, you know I have several to dispose of. Mr. Lackitt, I thank him, has left, though I say it, the richest widow upon the place: therefore I may afford to use you better than other people can. You shall have one upon any reasonable terms.

Well. That's a fair offer, indeed. 170

Wid. You shall find me as easy as any body you can have to do with, I assure you. Pray try me; I would have you try me, Mr. Welldon. Well, I like that name of yours exceedingly, Mr. Welldon.

Well. My name!

Wid. Oh, exceedingly! If any thing could persuade me to alter my own name, I verily believe nothing in the world would do it so soon, as to be called Mrs. Welldon.

Well. Why, indeed, Welldon doth sound something better than Lackitt. 180

Wid. Oh, a great deal better. Not that there is so much in the name neither. But, I don't know, there is something; I should like mightily to be called Mrs. Welldon.

Well. I'm glad you like my name.

Wid. Of all things. But then there's the misfortune, one cannot change one's name without changing one's condition.

Well. You'll hardly think it worth that, I believe. 188

Wid. Think it worth what, sir? Changing my condition! Indeed, sir, I think it worth every thing. But alas, Mr. Welldon! I have been a widow but six weeks; 'tis too soon to think of changing one's condition yet: indeed it is: pray don't desire it of me: not but that you may persuade me to any thing, sooner than any person in the world—

Well. Who, I, Mrs. Lackitt?

Wid. Indeed you may, Mr. Welldon, sooner than any man living. Lord, there's a great deal in saving a decency: I never minded it before; well, I am glad you spoke first, to excuse my modesty. But, what? modesty means nothing, and is the virtue of a girl, that does not know what she would be at: a widow should be wiser. Now I will own to you, (but I won't confess neither) I have had a great respect for you a great while. I beg your pardon, sir; and I must declare to you, indeed I must, if you desire to dispose of all I have in the world in an honourable way, which I don't pretend to be any way deserving your consideration, my fortune and person, if you won't understand me without telling you so, are both at your service; 'gad so! another time— 208

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. So, Mrs. Lackitt, your widowhood's weaning a-pace, I see which way 'tis going. Welldon, you're a happy man. The women and their favours come home to you.

Wid. A fiddle of favour, Mr. Stanmore: I am a lone woman, you know it, left in a great deal of business, and business must be followed, or lost. I have several stocks and plantations upon my hands, and other things to dispose of, which Mr. Welldon may have occasion for.

Well. We were just upon the brink of a bargain, as you came in.

Stan. Let me drive it on for you. 219

Well. So you must, I believe, you, or somebody for me.

Stan. I'll stand by you: I understand more of this business than you can pretend to.

Well. I don't pretend to it: 'tis quite out of my way indeed.

Stan. If the widow gets you to herself, she will certainly be too hard for you: I know her of old: she has no conscience in a corner; a very Jew in a bargain, and would circumcise you to get more of you.

Well. Is this true, widow? 229

Wid. Speak as you find, Mr. Welldon; I have offer'd you very fair: think upon't, and let me hear of you; the sooner the better, Mr. Welldon. [Exit.

Stan. I assure you, my friend, she'll cheat you if she can.

Well. I don't know that; but I can cheat her if I will.

Stan. Cheat her; how?

Well. I can marry her; and then I am sure I have it in my power to cheat her.

Stan. Can you marry her? 238

Well. Yes, faith, so she says: her pretty person and fortune, (which, one with another, you know, are not contemptible) are both at my service.

Stan. Contemptible! very considerable, egad; very desirable; why she's worth ten thousand pounds, man; a clear estate: no charge upon't, but a boobily son: he indeed was to have half; but his father begot him, and she breeds him up not to know or have more than she has a mind to: and she has a mind to something else, it seems.

Well. There's a great deal to be made of this— [Musing.

Stan. A handsome fortune may be made on't; and I advise you to't by all means. 250

Well. To marry her! an old wanton witch! I hate her.

Stan. No matter for that: let her go to the devil for you. She'll cheat her son of a good estate for you: that's a perquisite of a widow's portion always.

Well. I have a design, and will follow her at least, till I have a pennyworth of the plantation.

Stan. I speak as a friend, when I advise you to marry her, for 'tis directly against the interest of my own family. My cousin Jack has belaboured her a good while that way.

Well. What, honest Jack! I'll not hinder him. I'll give over the thoughts of it. 261

Stan. He'll make nothing on't: she does not care for him. I'm glad you have her in your power.

Well. I may be able to serve him.

Stan. Here's a ship come into the river; I was in hopes it had been from England.

Well. From England!

Stan. No. I was disappointed; I long to see this handsome cousin of yours; the picture you gave me of her has charmed me. 270

Well. You'll see whether it has flattered her or no, in a little time. If she be recovered of that illness that was the reason of her staying behind us, I know she will come with the first opportunity. We shall see her, or hear of her death.

Stan. We'll hope the best. The ships from England are expected every day.

Well. What ship is this?

Stan. A rover, a buccaneer, a trader in slaves; that's the commodity we deal in, you know. If you have a curiosity to see our manner of marketing, I'll wait upon you. 281

Well. We'll take my sister with us.— [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

An open Place. Enter Lieutenant Governor and BLANDFORD.

Gov. There's no resisting your fortune, Blandford; you draw all the prizes.

Blan. I draw for our lord governor, you know, his fortune favours me.

Gov. I grudge him nothing this time; but if fortune had favoured me in the last sale, the fair slave had been mine; Clemene had been mine.

Blan. Are you still in love with her? 290

Gov. Every day more in love with her.

Enter Captain DRIVER, teased and pulled about by Widow LACK-ITT, and several Planters. Enter, at another door, WELLDON, LUCY, and STANMORE.

Wid. Here have I six slaves in my lot, and not a man among them; all women and children; what can I do with 'em, captain? pray consider, I am a woman myself, and can't get my own slaves, as some of my neighbours do.

1st Plant. I have all men in mine: pray, captain, let the men and women be mingled together, for procreation sake, and the good of the plantation.

2d Plant. Ay, ay, a man and a woman, captain, for the good of the plantation. 300

Capt. Let them mingle together, and be damned; what care I? Would you have me a pimp for the good of the plantation?

1st Plant. I am a constant customer, captain.

Wid. I am always ready money to you, captain.

1st Plant. For that matter, mistress, my money is as ready as yours.

Wid. Pray hear me, captain.

Capt. Look you, I have done my part by you; I have brought the number of slaves I bargained for; if your lots have not pleased you, you must draw again among yourselves. 312

3d Plant. I am contented with my lot.

4th Plant. I am very well satisfied.

3d Plant. We'll have no drawing again.

Capt. Do you hear, mistress? you may hold your tongue: for my part I expect my money.

Wid. Captain, nobody questions or scruples the payment: but I won't hold my tongue; 'tis too much to pray and pay too; one may speak for one's own, I hope. 320

Capt. Well, what would you say?

Wid. I say no more than I can make out.

Capt. Out with it then.

Wid. I say, things have not been so fair carried on as they might have been. How do I know but you have juggled together in my absence? You drew the lots before I came, I am sure.

Capt. That's your own fault, mistress, you might have come sooner.

Wid. Then here's a prince, as they say, among the slaves, and you set him down to go as a common man. 331

Capt. Have you a mind to try what a man he is? You'll find him no more than a common man at your business.

Wid. Sir, you're a scurvy fellow to talk at this rate to me. If my husband were alive, gadsbodykins you would not use me so.

Capt. Right, mistress, I would not use you at all.

Wid. Not use me! your betters every inch of you, I would have you to know, would be glad to use me, sirrah. Marry come up here, who are you, I trow? You begin to think

yourself a captain, forsooth, because we call you so. You forget yourself as fast as you can ; but I remember you ; I know you for a pitiful paltry fellow as you are, an upstart to prosperity ; one that is but just come acquainted with cleanliness, and that never saw five shillings of your own without deserv- ing to be hanged for them.

Gov. She has given you a broadside, captain ; you'll stand up to her. 348

Capt. Hang her, "stink-pot," I'll come no nearer.

Wid. By this good light, it would make a woman do a thing she never designed ; marry again, though she were sure to repent it, and be revenged of such a——

J. Stan. What's the matter, Mrs. Lackitt, can I serve you.

Wid. No, no, you can't serve me : you are for serving yourself, I'm sure. Pray go about your business, I have none for you : you know, I have told you so. Lord, how can you be so troublesome ; nay, so unconscionable, to think every rich widow must throw herself away upon a young fellow that has nothing ?

Stan. Jack, you are answered, I suppose. 360

J. Stan. I'll have another pluck at her.

Wid. Mr. Welldon, I am a little out of order ; but pray bring your sister to dine with me. Gad's my life, I'm out of all patience with that pitiful fellow : my flesh rises at him : I can't stay in the place where he is—— [Exit.]

Blan. Captain, you have used the widow very familiarly.

Capt. This is my way ; I have no design, and therefore am not over-civil. If she had ever a handsome daughter to wheedle her out of ; or if I could make any thing of her booby son—— 370

Well. I may improve that hint, and make something of him. [Aside.]

Gov. She's very rich.

Capt. I'm rich myself. She has nothing that I want : I have no leaks to stop. Old women are fortune menders. I have made a good voyage, and would reap the fruits of my labours. We plow the deep, my masters ; but our harvest is on shore. I am for a young woman.

Stan. Look about, captain ; there's one ripe, and ready for the sickle. 380

Capt. A woman indeed ! I will be acquainted with her : who is she ?

Well. My sister, sir.

Capt. Would I were a-kin to her : if she were my sister, she should never go out of the family. What say you, mistress ? You expect I should marry you, I suppose.

Luc. I shan't be disappointed, if you don't.

[Turning away.]

Well. She won't break her heart, sir.

Capt. But I mean——

[Following her.]

Well. And I mean——

[Going between him and Lucy.]

That you must not think of her without marrying. 391

Capt. I mean so too.

Well. Why then your meaning's out.

Capt. You're very short.

Well. I'll grow, and be taller for you.

Capt. I shall grow angry and swear.

Well. You'll catch no fish then.

Capt. I don't well know, whether he designs to affront me or no.

Stan. No, no ; he's a little familiar : 'tis his way. 400

Capt. Say you so ? nay, I can be as familiar as he, if that be it. Well, sir, look upon me full. What say you ? how do you like me for a brother-in-law ?

Well. Why yes, faith, you'll do my business, [Turning him about.] if we can agree about my sister's.

Capt. I don't know whether your sister will like me, or not : I can't say much to her ; but I have money enough ; and if you are her brother, as you seem to be a-kin to her, I know that will recommend me to you. 409

Well. This is your market for slaves ; my sister is a free woman, and must not be disposed of in public. You shall be welcome to my house, if you please : and, upon better acquaintance, if my sister likes you, and I like your offers—

Capt. Very well, sir, I'll come and see her.

Gov. Where are the slaves, captain ? they are long a coming.

Blan. And who is this prince that's fallen to my lot for the lord governor ? Let me know something of him, that I may treat him accordingly ; who is he ? 419

Capt. He's the devil of a fellow, I can tell you ! a prince every inch of him ; you have paid dear enough for him, for all the good he'll do you : I was forced to clap him in irons, and did not think the ship safe neither. You are in hostility with the Indians, they say ; they threaten you daily : you had best have an eye upon him.

Blan. But who is he ?

Gov. And how do you know him to be a prince ?

Capt. He is son and heir to the great king of Angola, a mischievous monarch in those parts, who, by his good-will, would never let any of his neighbours be in quiet. This son was his general, a plaguy fighting fellow. I have formerly had dealings with him for slaves, which he took prisoners, and have got pretty roundly by him. But the wars being at an end, and nothing more to be got by the trade of that country, I made bold to bring the prince along with me.

Gov. How could you do that ?

Blan. What, steal a prince out of his own country ! impossible ! 438

Capt. 'Twas hard indeed; but I did it. You must know, this Oroonoko—

440

Blan. Is that his name?

Capt. Ay, Oroonoko.

Gov. Oroonoko.

Capt. Is naturally inquisitive about the men and manners of the white nations. Because I could give him some account of the other parts of the world, I grew very much into his favour: in return of so great an honour, you know, I could do no less, upon my coming away, than invite him on board me: never having been in a ship, he appointed his time, and I prepared my entertainment; he came the next evening, as private as he could, with about some twenty along with him. The punch went round; and as many of his attendants as would be dangerous, I sent dead drunk on shore; the rest we secured; and so you have the prince Oroonoko.

455

1st Plant. Gad-a-mercy, captain, there you were with him, i'faith.

2d Plant. Such men as you are fit to be employed in public affairs; the plantation will thrive by you.

3d Plant. Industry ought to be encouraged.

Capt. There's nothing done without it, boys. I have made my fortune this way.

Blan. Unheard-of villany!

Stan. Barbarous treachery!

Blan. They applaud him for't.

465

Gov. But, captain, methinks you have taken a great deal of pains for this prince Oroonoko; why did you part with him at the common rate of slaves?

Capt. Why, lieutenant-governor, I'll tell you: I did design to carry him to England, to have shewed him there; but I found him troublesome upon my hands, and I'm glad I'm rid of him—Oh, Oh, hark, they come.

472

Black Slaves, men, women, and children, pass across the stage by two and two; ABOAN, and others of OROONOKO's attendants, two and two; OROONOKO last of all in chains.

Luc. Are all these wretches slaves?

Stan. All sold, they and their posterity, all slaves.

Luc. Oh, miserable fortune!

Blan. Most of them know no better: they were born so, and only change their masters. But a prince, born only to command, betrayed and sold! my heart drops blood for him.

Capt. Now, Governor, here he comes: pray, observe him. 481

Oro. So, Sir, you have kept your word with me.

Capt. I am a better Christian, I thank you, than to keep it with a Heathen.

Oro. You are a Christian; be a Christian still.

If you have any god that teaches you

To break your word, I need not curse you more:

Let him cheat you, as you are false to me.

You faithful followers of my better fortune,

We have been fellow-soldiers in the field;

490

[Embracing his friends.]

Now we are fellow-slaves. This last farewell.

Be sure of one thing that will comfort us,

Whatever world we are next thrown upon

Cannot be worse than this. *[All slaves go off but Oroonoko.]*

Capt. You see what a bloody pagan he is, Governor; but I took care that none of his followers should be in the same lot with him, for fear they should undertake some desperate action, to the danger of the colony.

Oro. Live still in fear; it is the villain's curse,
And will revenge my chains; fear even me, 500

Who have no power to hurt thee. Nature abhors,
And drives thee out from the society
And commerce of mankind, for breach of faith.
Men live and prosper but in mutual trust,
A confidence of one another's truth:
That thou hast violated. I have done;
I know my fortune, and submit to it.

Gov. Sir, I am sorry for your fortune, and would help it
if I could. 309

Blan. Take off his chains. You know your condition;
but you are fallen into honourable hands: you are the lord
governor's slave, who will use you nobly: in his absence it
shall be my care to serve you. [*Blandford applying to him.*]

Oro. I hear you; but I can believe no more.

Gov. Captain, I am afraid the world won't speak so ho-
nourably of this action of yours as you would have them.

Capt. I have the money; let the world speak and be damn'd.
I care not.

Oro. I would forget myself. Be satisfied [*To Bland.*]
I am above the rank of common slaves, 520
Let that content you. The Christian there that knows me,
For his own sake will not discover more.

Capt. I have other matters to mind. You have him, and
much good may do you with your prince. [*Exit.*]

[*The planters pulling and staring at Oroonoko.*]

Blan. What would you have there? You stare as if you
never saw a man before. Stand farther off.

[*Turns them away.*]

Oro. Let them stare on.
I am unfortunate, but not ashamed
Of being so. No, let the guilty blush:
The white man that betray'd me: honest black 530
Disdains to change its colour. I am ready.

Where must I go ? Dispose me as you please.
I am not well acquainted with my fortune ;
But must learn to know it better : so, I know, you say,
Degrees make all things easy.

Blan. All things shall be easy.

Oro. Tear off this pomp, and let me know myself :
The slavish habit best becomes me now.
Hard fate, and whips, and chains may overpow'r
The frailer flesh, and bow my body down ; 340
But there's another, nobler part of me,
Out of your reach, which you can never tame.

Blan. You shall find nothing of this wretchedness
You apprehend. We are not monsters all.
You seem unwilling to disclose yourself :
Therefore, for fear the mentioning your name
Should give you new disquiets, I presume
To call you Cæsar.

Oro. I am myself ; but call me what you please.

Stan. A very good name, Cæsar. 550

Gov. And very fit for his character.

Oro. Was Cæsar then a slave ?

Gov. I think he was ; to pirates too ! He was a great conqueror, but unfortunate in his friends—

Oro. His friends were Christians ?

Blan. No.

Oro. No ! that's strange.

Gov. And murdered by them.

Oro. I would be Cæsar then. Yet I will live.

Blan. Live to be happier. 560

Oro. Do what you will with me.

Bland. I will wait upon you, attend, and serve you.

[Exit with Oroonoko.

Luc. Well, if the captain had brought this prince's coun-

try along with him, and would make me queen of it, I would not have him, after doing so base a thing.

Well. He's a man to thrive in the world, sister. He'll make you the better jointure.

Luc. Hang him, nothing can prosper with him.

Stan. Enquire into the great estates, and you'll find most of them depend upon the same title of honesty: the men who raise them first are much of the captain's principles.

Well. Ay, ay, as you say, let him be damned for the good of his family. Come, sister, we are invited to dinner.

Gow. Stanmore, you dine with me. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

*Widow LACKITT's House. Enter Widow LACKITT and
WELLDON.*

Welldon.

THIS is so great a favour, I don't know how to receive it.

Wid. Oh, dear sir! you know how to receive, and how to return a favour as well as any body, I don't doubt it: 'tis not the first you have had from our sex, I suppose.

Well. But this is so unexpected.

Wid. Lord, how can you say so, Mr. Welldon? I won't believe you. Don't I know you handsome gentlemen expect every thing a woman can do for you? And, by my troth, you're in the right on't. I think one can't do too much for a handsome gentleman; and so you shall find it. 10

Well. I shall never have such an offer again, that is certain. What shall I do? I am mightily divided—

[*Pretending a concern.*]

Wid. Divided! Oh, dear! I hope not so, sir. If I marry, truly, I expect to have you to myself.

Well. There is no danger of that, Mrs. Lackitt. I am divided in my thoughts. My father, upon his death-bed, obliged me to see my sister disposed of, before I married myself. 'Tis that sticks upon me. They say, indeed, promises are to be broken or kept: and I know 'tis a foolish thing to be tied to a promise; but I can't help it. I don't know how to get rid of it. 21

Wid. Is that all?

Well. All in all to me. The commands of a dying father, you know, ought to be obeyed.

Wid. And so they may.

Well. Impossible, to do me any good.

Wid. They sha'n't be your hindrance. You would have a husband for your sister, you say: he must be very well to pass too in the world, I suppose.

Well. I would not throw her away. 30

Wid. Then marry her out of hand to the sea-captain you were speaking of.

Well. I was thinking of him; but 'tis to no purpose; she hates him.

Wid. Does she hate him? Nay, 'tis no matter; an impudent rascal as he is; I would not advise her to marry him.

Well. Can you think of nobody else?

Wid. Let me see.

Well. Ay, pray do; I should be loth to part with my good fortune in you for so small a matter as a sister: but you find how it is with me. 41

Wid. Well remembered, i'faith. Well, if I thought you would like of it, I have a husband for her. What do you think of my son?

Well. You don't think of it yourself?

Wid. I protest but I do. I am in earnest, if you are. He shall marry her within this half hour, if you will give your consent to it.

Well. I give my consent! I'll answer for my sister she shall have him. You may be sure I shall be glad to get over the difficulty. 51

Wid. No more to be said then; that difficulty is over. But I vow and swear you frightened me, Mr. Welldon. If I had not had a son, now, for your sister, what must I have done, do you think? Were you not an ill-natured thing to boggle at a promise? I could break twenty for you.

Well. I am the more obliged to you: but this son will save all.

Wid. He's in the house. I'll go and bring him myself. [*Going.*] You would do well to break the business to your sister: she's within; I'll send her to you—— 61

[*Going again, comes back.*]

Well. Pray do.

Wid. But, do you hear? Perhaps she may stand upon her maidenly behaviour, and blush, and play the fool, and delay: but don't be answered so. What! she is not a girl at these years. Shew your authority, and tell her roundly she must be married immediately. I'll manage my son, I warrant you—— [*Goes out in haste.*]

Well. The widow's in haste, I see. I thought I had laid a rub in the road, about my sister; but she has stepped over that. She is making way for herself as fast as she can; but little thinks where she is going. I could tell her she is going to play the fool; but people don't love to hear of their faults: besides, that is not my business at present.

Enter Lucy.

So, sister, I have a husband for you—— 75

Luc. With all my heart. I don't know what confinement marriage may be to the men; but I'm sure the women have no liberty without it. I'm for any thing that will deliver me

from the care of a reputation, which I begin to find impossible to preserve. 80

Well. I'll ease you of that care. You must be married immediately.

Luc. The sooner the better ; for I am quite tired of setting up for a husband. The widow's foolish son is the man, I suppose.

Well. I considered your constitution, sister ; and, finding you would have occasion for a fool, I have provided accordingly.

Luc. I don't know what occasion I may have for a fool when I am married ; but I find none but fools have occasion to marry. 91

Well. Since he is to be a fool then, I thought it better for you to have one of his mother's making than your own ; 'twill save you the trouble. 102

Luc. I thank you. You take a great deal of pains for me ; but, pray, tell me, what you are doing for yourself, all this while.

Well. You are never true to your own secrets ; and therefore I won't trust you with mine. Only remember this, I am your eldest sister, and consequently, laying my breeches aside, have as much occasion for a husband as you can have. I have a man in my eye, be satisfied. 102

Enter Widow LACKITT, with her son DANIEL.

Wid. Come, Daniel, hold up thy head, child : look like a man ; you must not take it as you have done. Gad's my life ! there is nothing to be done with twirling your hat, man.

Dan. Why, mother, what's to be done then ?

Wid. Why, look me in the face, and mind what I say to you.

Dan. Marry, who's the fool then? What shall I get by minding what you say to me? 111

Wid. Mrs. Lucy, the boy is bashful; don't discourage him. Pray, come a little forward, and let him salute you.

[*Going between Lucy and Daniel.*]

Luc. A fine husband I am to have truly! [*To Wel.*]

Wid. Come, Daniel, you must be acquainted with this gentlewoman.

Dan. Nay, I am not proud; that is not my fault. I am presently acquainted, when I know the company; but this gentlewoman is a stranger to me.

Wid. She is your mistress. I have spoke a good word for you. Make her a bow, and go and kiss her. 121

Dan. Kiss her! have a care what you say: I warrant she scorns your words. Such fine folks are not used to be slopp'd and kiss'd. Do you think I don't know that, mother?

Wid. Try her, try her, man. [*Daniel bows, she thrusts him forward.*] Why, that's well done: go nearer her.

Dan. Is the devil in the woman? Why, so I can go nearer her, if you would let a body alone. [*To his mother.*] Cry you mercy, forsooth; my mother is always shaming one before company. She would have me as unmannerly as herself, and offer to kiss you. [*To Lucy.*]

Well. Why, won't you kiss her?

Dan. Why, pray, may I?

Well. Kiss her, kiss her, man. 135

Dan. Marry, and I will. [*Kisses her.*] Gadzooks, she kisses rarely! An' please you, mistress, and, seeing my mother will have it so, I don't much care if I kiss you again, forsooth. [*Kisses her again.*]

Luc. Well, how do you like me now?

Dan. Like you! Marry, I don't know. You have be-

witched me, I think. I was never so in my born days before.

Wid. You must marry this fine woman, Daniel.

Dan. Hey day ! marry her ! I was never married in all my life. What must I do with her then, mother ?

Wid. You must live with her, eat and drink with her, go to bed with her, and sleep with her. 148

Dan. Nay, marry, if I must go to bed with her, I shall never sleep, that's certain : she'll break me of my rest, quite and clean, I can tell you before-hand. As for eating and drinking with her, why, I have a good stomach, and can play my part in any company. But how do you think I can go to bed to a woman I don't know ?

Well. You shall know her better.

Dan. Say you so, sir ?

Well. Kiss her again, [Daniel kisses Lucy.

Dan. Nay, kissing, I find, will make us presently acquainted. We'll steal into a corner to practise a little ; and then I shall be able to do any thing. 160

Well. The young man mends apace.

Wid. Pray don't baulk him.

Dan. Mother, mother, if you'll stay in the room by me, and promise not to leave me, I don't care, for once, if I venture to go to bed with her.

Wid. There's a good child ; go in, and put on thy best clothes. Pluck up a spirit : I'll stay in the room by thee. She won't hurt thee, I warrant thee.

Dan. Nay, as to that matter, I am not afraid of her. I'll give her as good as she brings. I have a Rowland for her Oliver, and so thou may tell her. [Exit.

Wid. Mrs. Lucy, we sha'n't stay for you : you are in readiness, I suppose.

Well. She is always ready to do what I would have her, I must say that for my sister. 175

Wid. 'Twill be her own another day, Mr. Weldon; we'll marry them out of hand, and then——

Well. And then, Mrs. Lackitt, look to yourself. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter OROONOKO and BLANDFORD.

Oro. You grant I have good reason to suspect
 " All the professions you can make to me. 180

Blan. Indeed you have.

Oro. The dog that sold me did profess as much
 " As you can do—But yet, I know not why—
 " Whether it is because I'm fallen so low,
 " And have no more to fear—That is not it :
 " I am a slave no longer than I please.
 " 'Tis something nobler—Being just myself,
 " I am inclining to think others so :
 " 'Tis that prevails upon me to believe you.

Blan. You may believe me. 190

Oro. I do believe you.
 " From what I know of you, you are no fool :
 " Fools only are the knaves, and live by tricks :
 " Wise men may thrive without them, and be honest.

Blan. They won't all take your counsel. [*Aside.*]

Oro. " You know my story, and" you say you are
 A friend to my misfortunes : that's a name
 Will teach you what you owe yourself and me.

Blan. I'll study to deserve to be your friend.
 When once our noble governor arrives, 200
 With him you will not need my interest :
 He is too generous not to feel your wrongs.
 But be assur'd I will employ my pow'r,
 And find the means to send you home again.

Oro. I thank you, sir—My honest, wretched friends !

[*Sighing.*]

Their chains are heavy: they have hardly found
 So kind a master. May I ask you, sir,
 What is become of them? Perhaps I should not.
 You will forgive a stranger.

Blan. I'll enquire,
 And use my best endeavours, where they are,
 To have them gently us'd.

210

Oro. Once more I thank you.
 You offer every cordial that can keep
 My hopes alive, to wait a better day.
 What friendly care can do, you have apply'd:
 But, oh! I have a grief admits no cure.

Blan. You do not know, sir——

Oro. Can you raise the dead?
 Pursue and overtake the wings of time,
 And bring about again the hours, the days,
 The years that made me happy?

220

Blan. That is not to be done.

Oro. No, there is nothing to be done for me.

[Kneeling and kissing the earth.]

Thou god ador'd! thou ever-glorious sun!
 If she be yet on earth, send me a beam
 Of thy all-seeing pow'r to light me to her;
 Or, if thy sister goddess has preferr'd
 Her beauty to the skies, to be a star,
 Oh, tell me where she shines, that I may stand
 Whole nights, and gaze upon her.

230

Blan. I am rude, and interrupt you.

Oro. I am troublesome:

But pray, give me your pardon. My swoll'n heart
 Bursts out its passage, and I must complain,
 (Oh, can you think of nothing dearer to me!
 Dearer than liberty, my country, friends,

Much dearer than my life ?) that I have lost
The tend'rest, best belov'd, and loving wife.

Blan. Alas, I pity you!

240

Oro. Do, pity me :

Pity's akin to love ; and every thought
Of that soft kind is welcome to my soul.
I would be pitt'y'd here.

Blan. I dare not ask

More than you please to tell me : but if you
Think it convenient to let me know
Your story, I dare promise you to bear
A part in your distress, if not assist you.

Oro. Thou honest-hearted man ! I wanted such, 250
Just such a friend as thou art, that would sit
Still as the night, and let me talk whole days
Of my Imoinda. Oh, I'll tell thee all
From first to last ! and, pray, observe me well.

Blan. I will most heedfully.

Oro. There was a stranger in my father's court,
Valu'd and honour'd much. He was a white,
The first I ever saw of your complexion.
He chang'd his god for ours, and so grew great,
Of many virtues, and so fam'd in arms, 260
He still commanded all my father's wars.
I was bred under him. One fatal day,
The armies joining, he before me stepp'd,
Receiving in his breast a poison'd dart
Levell'd at me. He dy'd within my arms.
I've tir'd you already.

Blan. Pray, go on.

Oro. He left an only daughter, whom he brought
An infant to Angola. When I came
Back to the court, a happy conqueror,

270

Humanity oblig'd me to condole
With this sad virgin, for a father's loss;
Lost for my safety. I presented her
With all the slaves of battle, to atone
Her father's ghost. But when I saw her face,
And heard her speak, I offered up myself
To be the sacrifice. She bow'd and blush'd,
I wonder'd and ador'd. The sacred pow'r
That had subdu'd me, then inspir'd my tongue,
Inclin'd her heart, and all our talk was love.

280

Blan. Then you were happy.

Oro. Oh, I was too happy!

I marry'd her: and, though my country's custom
Indulg'd the privilege of many wives,
I swore myself never to know but her.
She grew with child, and I grew happier still.
Oh, my Imoinda! but it could not last.
Her fatal beauty reach'd my father's ears:
He sent for her to court, where, cursed court!
No woman comes but for his amorous use.
He raging to possess her, she was forc'd
To own herself my wife. The furious king
Started at incest; but grown desperate,
Not daring to enjoy what he desir'd,
In mad revenge, (which I could never learn)
He poison'd her, or sent her far, far off,
Far from my hopes ever to see her more.

290

Blan. Most barbarous of fathers! The sad tale
Has struck me dumb with wonder.

Oro. I have done.

300

I'll trouble you no farther. Now and then
A sigh will have its way; that shall be all.

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. Blandford, the lieutenant-governor is gone to your plantation. He desires you would bring the royal slave with you. The sight of his fair mistress, he says, is an entertainment for a prince. He would have his opinion of her.

Oro. Is he a lover?

Blan. So he says himself: he flatters a beautiful slave that I have, and calls her mistress.

Oro. Must he then flatter her to call her mistress? 310
I pity the proud man, who thinks himself
Above being in love. What, tho' she be a slave,
She may deserve him.

Blan. You shall judge of that when you see her, sir.

Oro. I go with you. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

A Plantation. Lieutenant Governor following IMOINDA.

Gov. I have disturb'd you. I confess my faults,
My fair Clemene; "but begin again,
" And I will listen to your mournful song,
" Sweet as the soft, complaining nightingale's;
" While every note calls out my trembling soul, 320
" And leaves me silent, as the midnight groves,
" Only to shelter you." Sing, sing again,
And let me wonder at the many ways
You have to ravish me.

Imo. Oh, I can weep
Enough for you and me, if that will please you.

Gov. You must not weep: I come to dry your tears,
And raise you from your sorrow. Look upon me:

" Look with the eyes of kind indulging love,

" That I may have full cause for what I say :"

330

I came to offer you your liberty,

And be myself the slave. You turn away; [*Following her.*

But every thing becomes you. I may take

This pretty hand : I know your modesty

Would draw it back ; but you would take it ill

If I should let it go ; I know ye would.

You shall be gently forc'd to please yourself :

That you will thank me for.

[*She struggles and gets her hand from him, then he offers to kiss her.*

Nay, if you struggle with me, I must take——

Imo. You may my life, that I can part with freely. [*Exit.*

Enter BLANDFORD, STANMORE, and OROONOKO.

Blan. So, governor, we don't disturb you, I hope ?

41

Your mistress has left you. You were making love :

She's thankful for the honour, I suppose.

Gov. Quite insensible to all I say and do.

When I speak to her, she sighs, or weeps ;

But never answers me as I would have her.

Stan. There's something nearer than her slavery that touches her.

Blan. What do her fellow slaves say of her ? Cann't they find the cause ?

350

Gov. Some of them, who pretend to be wiser than the rest, and hate her, I suppose, for being used better than they are, will needs have it that she is with child.

Blan. Poor wretch ! if it be so, I pity her.

She has lost a husband, that, perhaps, was dear
To her ; and then you cannot blame her.

Oro. If it be so, indeed you cannot blame her. [*Sighing.*

Gov. No, no, it is not so. If it be so,
I must still love her; and, desiring still,
I must enjoy her.

360

Blan. Try what you can do with fair means, and welcome.

Gov. I'll give you ten slaves for her.

Blan. You know she is our lord governor's: but if I could
dispose of her, I would not now, especially to you.

Gov. Why not to me?

Blan. I mean against her will. You are in love with her;
And we all know what your desires would have.
Love stops at nothing but possession.

“ Were she within your pow'r, you do not know

“ How soon you would be tempted to forget

370

“ The nature of the deed, and, may be, act

“ A violence you after would repent.”

Oro. 'Tis godlike in you to protect the weak.

Gov. Fie, fie! I would not force her. Tho' she be
A slave, her mind is free, and should consent.

Oro. Such honour will engage her to consent:
And then, if you're in love, she's worth the having.
Shall we not see the wonder?

Gov. Have a care;
You have a heart, and she has conqu'ring eyes.

380

Oro. I have a heart; but if it could be false
To my first vows, ever to love again,
These honest hands should tear it from my breast,
And throw the traitor from me. Oh, Imoinda,
Living, or dead, I can be only thine!

Blan. Imoinda was his wife: she's either dead,
Or, living, dead to him: forc'd from his arms
By an inhuman father. Another time
I'll tell you all.

[*To the Gov. and Stan.*

Stan. Hark ! the slaves have done their work ; 390
And now begins their evening merriment.

Blan. The men are all in love with fair Clemene
As much as you are ; and the women hate her,
From an instinct of natural jealousy.
They sing, and dance, and try their little tricks
To entertain her, and divert her sadness.
May be she is among them. Shall we see. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.

*The Slaves, men, women, and children, upon the ground ; some
rise and dance.*

“ A SONG, by a Boy.

“ A lass there lives upon the green,
“ Could I her picture draw ;
“ A brighter nymph was never seen, 400
“ That looks and reigns a little queen,
“ And keeps the swains in awe.

“ Her eyes are Cupid’s darts and wings,
“ Her eye-brows are his bow :
“ Her silken hair the silver strings,
“ Which sure and swift destruction brings
“ To all the world below.

“ If Pastorella’s dawning light
“ Can warm and wound us so,
“ Her noon will shine so piercing bright, 410
“ Each glancing beam will kill outright,
“ And every swain subdue.

" A SONG. By a MAN.

" Bright Cynthia's power, divinely great,

" What heart is not obeying ?

" A thousand Cupids on her wait,

" And in her eyes are playing.

" She seems the queen of love to reign ;

" For she alone dispenses

" Such sweets as best can entertain

" The gust of all the senses.

420

" Her face a charming prospect brings,

" Her breath gives balmy blisses ;

" I hear an angel when she sings,

" And taste of Heav'n in kisses.

" Four senses thus she feasts with joy,

" From Nature's richest treasure :

" Let me the other sense employ,

" And I shall die with pleasure."

During the Entertainment, the Governor, BLANDFORD, STANMORE, OROONOKO, enter as spectators ; that ended, Captain DRIVER, JACK STANMORE, and several Planters enter with their swords drawn. Drum beats, and a bell rings.

Capt. Where are you, governor ? Make what haste you can
To save yourself and the whole colony.
I bid them ring the bell.

430

Gov. What's the matter ?

J. Stan. The Indians are come down upon us : they have
plundered some of the plantations already, and are marching
this way as fast as they can.

Gov. What can we do against them?

Blan. We shall be able to make a stand, till more planters come in to us.

J. Stan. There are a great many more without, if you would shew yourself, and put us in order. 440

Gov. There's no danger of the white slaves, they'll not stir. Blandford and Stanmore, come you along with me. Some of you stay here to look after the black slaves.

[*All go out but the Captain and six Planters, who all at once seize OROONOKO.*]

1st Plant. Ay, ay, let us alone.

Capt. In the first place, we secure you, sir,
As an enemy to government.

Oro. Are you there, sir? You are my constant friend.

1st Plant. You will be able to do a great deal of mischief.

Capt. But we shall prevent you: bring the irons hither, He has the malice of a slave in him, and would be glad to be cutting his masters throats. I know him. Chain his hands and feet, that he may not run over to 'em. If they have him, they'll carry him on their backs, that I can tell 'em.

[*As they are chaining him, BLANDFORD enters, runs to 'em.*]

Blan. What are you doing there?

Capt. Securing the main chance: this is a bosom enemy.

Blan. Away you brutes: I'll answer with my life for his behaviour; so tell the governor.

Capt. and Plant. Well, sir, so we will. [*Ex. Capt. and Plant.*]

Oro. Give me a sword, and I'll deserve your trust. 459

[*A party of Indians enter, hurrying Imoinda among the Slaves; another party of Indians sustains 'em retreating; followed at a distance by the Governor with the Planters; Blandford, Oroonoko, join 'em.*]

Blan. Hell and the devil! they drive away our slaves before our faces. Governor, can you stand tamely by, and suffer this? Clemene, sir, your mistress, is among 'em.

Gov. We throw ourselves away, in the attempt to rescue 'em.

Oro. A lover cannot fall more glorious,
Than in the cause of love. He, that deserves
His mistress' favour, wo' not stay behind :
I'll lead you on, be bold, and follow me.

[Oroonoko, at the head of the Planters, falls upon the Indians with a great shout, and beats them off.]

Enter IMOINDA.

Imo. I'm tost about by my tempestuous fate,
And no where must have rest : Indians, or English ! 470
Whoever has me, I am still a slave.
No matter whose I am, since I'm no more
My royal master's ; since I'm his no more.
Oh, I was happy ! nay, I will be happy,
In the dear thought that I am still his wife,
Though far divided from him.

[Draws off to a corner of the stage.]

Enter the Governor with OROONOKO, BLANDFORD, STAN-
MORE, and the Planters.

Gov. Thou glorious man ! thou something greater sure
Than Cæsar ever was ! that single arm
Has sav'd us all : accept our general thanks.

[All bow to Oroonoko.]

And what can we do more to recompense 480
Such noble services, you shall command.
Clemene too shall thank you——she is safe——
Look up, and bless your brave deliverer.

[Brings Clemene forward, looking down on the ground.]

Oro. Bless me indeed !

Blan. You start !

Oro. Oh, all you gods,
Who govern this great world, and bring about
Things strange and unexpected! can it be?

Gov. What is't you stare at so?

Oro. Answer me, some of you; you who have pow'r,
And have your senses free: or are you all 491
Struck through with wonder too? [*Looking still fixed on her.*

Blan. What would you know?

Oro. My soul steals from my body through my eyes;
All that is left of life I'll gaze away,
And die upon the pleasure.

Gov. This is strange!

Oro. If you but mock me with her image here:
If she be not Imoinda——

[*She looks upon him, and falls into a swoon; he runs to her.*

Ha! she faints! 500

Nay, then it must be she: it is Imoinda:

My heart confesses her, and leaps for joy,

To welcome her to her own empire here.

"I feel her all, in ev'ry part of me.

"Oh, let me press her in my eager arms,

"Wake her to life, and with this kindling kiss

"Give back that soul, she only lent me. [*Kisses her.*

"Gov. I am amaz'd!

"Blan. I am as much as you.

"Oro." Imoinda! Oh, thy Oroonoko calls. 510

[*Imoinda coming to life.*

Imo. My Oroonoko? Oh, I can't believe

What any man can say. But, if I am

To be deceiv'd, there's something in that name,

That voice, that face—— [*Staring at him.*

Oh, if I know myself, I cannot be mistaken.

[*Runs and embraces Oroonoko.*

Oro. Never here :

You cannot be mistaken : I am yours,
Your Oroonoko, all that you would have,
Your tender loving husband.

Imo. All indeed

250

That I would have : my husband ! then I am
Alive, and waking to the joys I feel :
They were so great, I could not think 'em true ;
But I believe all that you say to me :
For truth itself and everlasting love
Grows in this breast, and pleasure in these arms.

Oro. Take, take me all : enquire into my heart,
(You know the way to ev'ry secret there)
My heart, the sacred treasury of love ;
And if, in absence, I have misemploy'd
A mite from the rich store ; if I have spent
A wish, a sigh, but what I sent to you ;
May I be curs'd to wish and sigh in vain,
And you not pity me.

530

Imo. Oh, I believe,

And know you by myself. If these sad eyes,
Since last we parted, have beheld the face
Of any comfort, or once wish'd to see
The light of any other heav'n but you,
May I be struck this moment blind, and lose
Your blessed sight, never to find you more.

540

Oro. Imoinda ! Oh, this separation
Has made you dearer, if it can be so,
Than you were ever to me. You appear
Like a kind star to my benighted steps,
To guide me on my way to happiness :
I cannot miss it now. Governor, friend,
You think me mad : but let me bless you all,

Who, any ways, have been the instruments
Of finding her again. Imoinda's found ! 550
And ev'ry thing that I would have in her.

[*Embracing her with the most passionate fondness.*]

Stan. Where's your mistress now, governor ?

Gov. Why, where most men's mistresses are forced to be
sometimes,

With her husband, it seems : but I won't lose her so. [*Aside.*]

Stan. He has fought lustily for her, and deserves her, I'll
say that for him.

Blan. Sir, we congratulate your happiness : I do most
heartily.

Gov. And all of us ; but how it comes to pass——

“ Oro. That will require 560

“ More precious time than I can spare you now.

“ I have a thousand things to ask her,

“ And she has many more to know of me.

“ But you have made me happier, I confess,

“ Acknowledge it, much happier than I

“ Have words or pow'r to tell you. Captain, you,

“ Ev'n you, who most have wrong'd me, I forgive.

“ I wo' not say you have betray'd me now :

“ I'll think you but the minister of Fate,

“ To bring me to my lov'd Imoinda here.” 570

Imo. How, how, shall I receive you ? how be worthy

Of such endearments, all this tenderness ?

These are the transports of prosperity,

When fortune smiles upon us.

Oro. Let the fools

Who follow fortune, live upon her smiles ;

All our prosperity is plac'd in love,

We have enough of that to make us happy.

This little spot of earth, you stand upon,

Is more to me than the extended plains
Of my great father's kingdom. Here I reign
In full delights, in joys to pow'r unknown;
Your love my empire, and your heart my throne. [*Exeunt.*]

580

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter ABOAN, with several Slaves, and HOTMAN.

Hotman.

WHAT! to be slaves to cowards! Slaves to rogues, who
cann't defend themselves!

Abo. Who is this fellow? he talks as if he were acquainted
with our design: is he one of us? [*Aside to his own gang.*]

Slave. Not yet: but he will be glad to make one, I be-
lieve.

Abo. He makes a mighty noise.

Hot. Go, sneak in corners; whisper out your griefs,
For fear your masters hear you: cringe and crouch
Under the bloody whip, like beaten curs, 10
That lick their wounds, and know no other cure.
All wretches, all! you feel their cruelty,
As much as I can feel, but dare not groan.
For my part, while I have a life and tongue,
I'll curse the authors of my slavery.

Abo. Have you been long a slave?

Hot. Yes, many years.

Abo. And do you only curse?

Hot. Curse! only curse! I cannot conjure
To raise the spirits up of other men: 20
I am but one. Oh, for a soul-of-fire,
To warm and animate our common cause,

And make a body of us, then I would
Do something more than curse.

Abo. That body set on foot, you would be one,
A limb, to lend it motion.

Hot. I would be
The heart of it, the head, the hand, and heart :
Would I could see the day ?

Abo. You will do all yourself.

30

Hot. I would do more
Than I shall speak ; but I may find a time——

Abo. The time may come to you ; be ready for't.
Methinks he talks too much ; I'll know him more,
Before I trust him farther.

[*Aside.*]

Slave. If he dares
Half what he says, he'll be of use to us.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Blan. If there be any one among you here
That did belong to Oroonoko, speak,
I come to him.

40

Abo. I did belong to him ; Aboan my name.

Blan. You are the man I want : pray come with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter OROONOKO and IMOINDA.

Oro. I do not blame my father for his love :
(Though that had been enough to ruin me)
“ 'Twas nature's fault that made you, like the sun,
“ The reasonable worship of mankind :
“ He could not help his adoration.
“ Age had not lock'd his senses up so close,
“ But he had eyes, that open'd to his soul,
“ And took your beauties in : he felt your pow'r,

50

" And therefore I forgive his loving you."
But, when I think on his barbarity,
That could expose you to so many wrongs ;
Driving you out to wretched slavery,
Only for being mine ; then I confess
I wish I could forget the name of son,
That I might curse the tyrant.

Imo. I will bless him,
For I have found you here : heav'n only knows
What is reserv'd for us ; but, if we guess
The future by the past, our fortune must
Be wonderful, above the common size
Of good or ill ; it must be in extremes :
Extremely happy, or extremely wretched.

Oro. 'Tis in our pow'r to make it happy now.

Imo. But not to keep it so.

60

Enter BLANDFORD and ABOAN.

Blan. My royal lord !
I have a present for you.

Oro. Aboan !

Abo. Your lowest slave.

Oro. My try'd and valu'd friend !

70

This worthy man always prevents my wants :
I only wish'd, and he has brought thee to me.
Thou art surpris'd ! Carry thy duty there ;

[Aboan goes to Imoinda, and falls at her feet.]

While I acknowledge mine. How shall I thank you ?

Blan. Believe me honest to your interest,
And I am more than paid. I have secur'd
That all your followers shall be gently us'd,
Shall wait upon your person, while you stay
Among us.

80

Oro. I owe ev'ry thing to you.

Blan. You must not think you are in slavery.

Oro. I do not find I am.

Blan. Kind Heav'n has miraculously sent
Those comforts, that may teach you to expect
Its farther care, in your deliverance.

Oro. I sometimes think myself, Heav'n is concern'd
For my deliverance.

Blan. It will be soon ;

You may expect it. Pray, in the mean time,
Appear as cheerful as you can among us.
You have some enemies, that represent
You dangerous, and would be glad to find
A reason, in your discontent, to fear :
They watch your looks. But there are honest men,
Who are your friends : you are secur'd in them.

Oro. I thank you for your caution.

Blan. I will leave you :

And be assur'd, I wish your liberty.

[Exit.

Abo. He speaks you very fair.

100

Oro. He means me fair.

Abo. If he should not, my lord ?

Oro. If he should not ?

I'll not suspect his truth : but, if I did,
What shall I get by doubting ?

Abo. You secure

Not to be disappointed : but, besides,
There's this advantage in suspecting him :
When you put off the hopes of other men,
You will rely upon your god-like self ;
And then you may be sure of liberty.

110

Oro. Be sure of liberty ! what dost thou mean ;
Advising to rely upon myself ?

I think I may be sure on't: we must wait:

'Tis worth a little patience.

[Turning to Imoinda.

Abo. Oh, my lord!

Oro. What dost thou drive at?

Abo. Sir, another time

You would have found it sooner: but I see

Love has your heart, and takes up all your thoughts. 120

Oro. And canst thou blame me?

Abo. Sir, I must not blame you.

But, as our fortune stands, there is a passion

(Your pardon, royal mistress, I must speak)

That would become you better than your love:

A brave resentment; which, inspir'd by you,

Might kindle and diffuse a gen'rous rage

Among the slaves, to rouse and shake our chains,

And struggle to be free.

Oro. How can we help ourselves?

130

Abo. I knew you when you would have found a way.

How help ourselves! the very Indians teach us:

We need but to attempt our liberty,

And we carry it. We have hands sufficient,

Double the number of our masters' force,

Ready to be employ'd. "What hinders us

"To set 'em at work?" We want but you,

To head our enterprise, and bid us strike.

Oro. What would you do?

Abo. Cut our oppressors' throats.

140

Oro. And you would have me join in your design
Of murder!

Abo. It deserves a better name:

But, be it what it will, 'tis justified

By self-defence, and natural liberty.

Oro. I'll hear no more on't.

Abo. I am sorry for't.

Oro. Nor shall you think of it.

Abo. Not think of it.

Oro. No, I command you not.

150

Abo. Remember, sir,

You are a slave yourself, and to command
Is now another's right. Not think of it!
Since the first moment they put on my chains,
I've thought on nothing but the weight of 'em,
And how to throw 'em off. Can yours sit easy?

Oro. I have a sense of my condition,
As painful, and as quick, as yours can be.
I feel for my Imoinda and myself;
Imoinda, much the tenderest part of me.
But though I languish for my liberty,
I would not buy it at the Christian price
Of black ingratitude: they sha'not say,
That we deserv'd our fortune by our crimes.
Murder the innocent!

160

Abo. The innocent!

Oro. These men are so, whom you would rise against:
If we are slaves, they did not make us slaves;
But bought us in an honest way of trade,
As we have done before 'em, bought and sold
Many a wretch, and never thought it wrong.
" They paid our price for us, and we are now
" Their property, a part of their estate,
" To manage as they please. Mistake me not."
I do not tamely say, that we should bear
All they could lay upon us: but we find
The load so light, so little to be felt,
(Considering they have us in their pow'r,
And may inflict what grievances they please)

170

We ought not to complain.

180

Abo. My royal lord !

You do not know the heavy grievances,
The toils, the labours, weary drudgeries,
Which they impose ; burdens more fit for beasts,
For senseless beasts to bear, than thinking men.
Then if you saw the bloody cruelties
They execute on every slight offence ;
Nay, sometimes in their proud, insulting sport,
How worse than dogs they lash their fellow-creatures,
Your heart would bleed for 'em. Oh, could you know 190
How many wretches lift their hands and eyes
To you for their relief !

Oro. I pity 'em,
And wish I could with honesty do more.
Abo. You must do more, and may, with honesty.

Oh, royal sir, remember who you are :
A prince, born for the good of other men ;
Whose god-like office is to draw the sword
Against oppression, and set free mankind :
And this I'm sure you think oppression now. 200
What though you have not felt these miseries,
Never believe you are oblig'd to them :
They have their selfish reasons, may be, now,
For using of you well : but there will come
A time, when you must have your share of 'em.

Oro. You see how little cause I have to think so :
Favour'd in my own person, in my friends ;
Indulg'd in all that can concern my care,
In my Imoinda's soft society. [Embracing her.

Abo. And therefore would you lie contented down 210
In the forgetfulness, and arms of love,
To get young princes for 'em ?

Oro. Say'st thou ! ha !

Abo. Princes, the heirs of empire, and the last
Of your illustrious lineage, to be born
To pamper up their pride, and be their slaves ?

Oro. Imoinda ! save me, save me from that thought.

“ *Imo.* There is no safety from it : I have long

“ Suffer'd it with a mother's labouring pains ;

“ And can no longer. Kill me, kill me now,

220

“ While I am bless'd, and happy in your love ;

“ Rather than let me live to see you hate me :

“ As you must hate me ; me, the only cause,

“ The fountain of these flowing miseries :

“ Dry up the spring of life, this pois'nous spring,

“ That swells so fast, to overwhelm us all.

“ *Oro.*” Shall the dear babe, the eldest of my hopes,
Whom I begot a prince, be born a slave ?

The treasure of this temple was design'd

T' enrich a kingdom's fortune : shall it here

230

Be seiz'd upon by vile unhallow'd hands,

To be employ'd in uses most profane ?

Abo. In most unworthy uses ; think of that ;

And, while you may, prevent it. “ Oh, my lord,

“ Rely on nothing that they say to you.

“ They speak you fair, I know, and bid you wait :

“ But think what 'tis to wait on promises,

“ And promises of men who know no tie

“ Upon their words, against their interest :

“ And where's their interest in freeing you ?

240

“ *Imo.* Oh, where indeed, to lose so many slaves ?

“ *Abo.* Nay, grant this man, you think so much your
friend,

“ Be honest, and intends all that he says ;

“ He is but one ; and in a government,

" Where, he confesses, you have enemies,
 " That watch your looks; what looks can you put on,
 " To please these men, who are before resolv'd
 " To read 'em their own way? Alas, my lord!
 " If they incline to think you dangerous,
 " They have their knavish arts to make you so: 250
 " And then who knows how far their cruelty
 " May carry their revenge!

" *Imo.* To every thing
 " That does belong to you, your friends and me:
 " I shall be torn from you, forced away,
 " Helpless and miserable: shall I live
 " To see that day again?

" *Oro.* That day shall never come."

" *Abu.*" I know you are persuaded to believe
 The governor's arrival will prevent 260
 These mischiefs, and bestow your liberty:
 But who is sure of that? I rather fear
 More mischiefs from his coming. He is young,
 Luxurious, passionate, and amorous:
 Such a complexion, and made bold by pow'r,
 To countenance all he is prone to do,
 Will know no bounds, no law against his lusts.
 If, in a fit of his intemperance,
 With a strong hand he shall resolve to seize,
 And force my royal mistress from your arms, 270
 How can you help yourself?

" *Oro.* Ha! thou hast rous'd
 The lion in his den; he stalks abroad,
 And the wide forest trembles at his roar.
 I find the danger now. My spirits start
 At the alarm, and from all quarters come
 To man my heart, the citadel of love.

Is there a pow'r on earth to force you from me,
 And shall I not resist it ? " nor strike first
 " To keep, to save you : to prevent that curse ? 280
 " This is your cause, and shall it not prevail ?"

Oh, you were born always to conquer me.
 Now I am fashion'd to thy purpose ; speak,
 What combination, what conspiracy,
 Would'st thou engage me in ? I'll undertake
 All thou would'st have me now for liberty,
 For the great cause of love and liberty.

Abo. Now, my great master, you appear yourself.
 And, since we have you join'd in our design,
 It cannot fail us. I have muster'd up 290
 The choicest slaves, men who are sensible
 Of their condition, and seem most resolv'd :
 They have their several parties.

Oro. Summon 'em,
 Assemble 'em : I will come forth and shew
 Myself among 'em : if they are resolv'd,
 I'll lead their foremost resolutions.

Abo. I have provided those will follow you.

Oro. With this reserve in our proceedings still,
 The means that lead us to our liberty 300
 Must not be bloody.

" *Abo.* You command in all.

" We shall expect you, sir.

" *Oro.* You sha'not long."

[*Exeunt Oro. and Imo. at one door, Aboan at another.*

Welldon coming in before Mrs. Lackitt.

Wid. These unmannerly Indians were something unreasonable to disturb us just in the nick, Mr. Welldon ; but I have the parson within call still, to do us the good turn.

Well. We had best stay a little, I think, to see things settled again, had not we? Marriage is a serious thing you know. 310

Wid. What do you talk of a serious thing, Mr. Welldon? I think you have found me sufficiently serious: I have married my son to your sister, to pleasure you; and now I come to claim your promise to me, you tell me marriage is a serious thing.

Well. Why is it not?

Wid. Fiddle, faddle, I know what it is: 'tis not the first time I have been married, I hope: but I shall begin to think you don't design to do fairly by me, so I shall. 319

Well. Why indeed, Mrs. Lackitt, I'm afraid I can't do so fairly as I would by you. 'Tis what you must know first or last; and I should be the worst man in the world to conceal it any longer; therefore I must own to you that I am married already.

Wid. Married! you don't say so, I hope! how have you the conscience to tell me such a thing to my face. Have you abused me then, fool'd and cheated me? What do you take me for, Mr. Welldon? Do you think I am to be served at this rate? But you shan't find me the silly creature you think me: I would have you to know, I understand better things, than to ruin my son without a valuable consideration. If I can't have you, I can keep my money. Your sister sha'n't have the catch of him she expected: I won't part with a shilling to 'em. 334

Well. You made the match yourself, you know: you can't blame me.

Wid. Yes, yes, I can, and do blame you: you might have told me before, you were married.

Well. I would not have told you now; but you followed me so close, I was forced to it: indeed I am married in Eng-

land ; but 'tis as if I were not ; for I have been parted from my wife a great while, and to do reason on both sides, we hate one another heartily. Now I did design, and will marry you still, if you'll have a little patience.

Wid. A likely business truly.

Well. I have a friend in England that I will write to, to poison my wife, and then I can marry you with a good conscience ; if you love me, as you say you do, you'll consent to that, I'm sure.

Wid. And will he do it, do you think ? 350

Well. At the first word, or he is not the man I take him to be.

Wid. Well, you are a dear devil, Mr. Welldon : and would you poison your wife for me ?

Well. I would do any thing for you.

Wid. Well, I am mightily obliged to you. But 'twill be a great while before you can have an answer to your letter.

Well. 'Twill be a great while indeed.

Wid. In the mean time, Mr. Welldon—— 359

Well. Why in the mean time——Here's company :
We'll settle that within ; I'll follow you. [Exit Widow.]

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. So, sir, you carry on your business swimmingly : you have stolen a wedding, I hear.

Well. Ay, my sister is married : and I am very near being run away with myself.

Stan. The widow will have you then ?

Well. You come very seasonably to my rescue.
Jack Stanmore is to be had, I hope ?

Stan. At half an hour's warning.

Well. I must advise with you. [Exeunt.]

" SCENE II.

" *The Country.* Enter OROONOKO with ABOAN, HOTMAN,
and Slaves.

- " Oro. Impossible ! nothing's impossible : 371
- " We know our strength only by being try'd.
- " If you object the mountains, rivers, woods
- " Unpassable, that lie before our march :
- " Woods we can set on fire : we swim by nature :
- " What can oppose us then but we may tame ?
- " All things submit to virtuous industry :
- " That we carry with us, that is ours.
- " *Slav.* Great sir, we have attended all you said,
- " With silent joy and admiration : 380
- " And, were we only men, would follow such,
- " So great a leader, through the untry'd world.
- " But, oh, consider, we have other names,
- " Husbands and fathers, and have things more dear
- " To us than life, our children and our wives,
- " Unfit for such an expedition :
- " What must become of them ?
- " Oro. We wo't not wrong
- " The virtue of our women to believe
- " There is a wife among them would refuse 390
- " To share her husband's fortune. What is hard,
- " We must make easy to them in our love : while we live,
- " And have our limbs, we can take care of them ;
- " Therefore I still propose to lead our march
- " Down to the sea, and plant a colony ;
- " Where, in our native innocence, we shall live
- " Free, and be able to defend ourselves,

" Till stress of weather, or some accident,

" Provide a ship for us.

" *Abo.* An accident!

400

" The luckiest accident presents itself;

" The very ship that brought and made us slaves

" Swims in the river still; I see no cause

" But we may seize on that.

" *Oro.* It shall be so:

" There is a justice in it pleases me.

" Do you agree to it?

[To the Slaves.

" *Omnes.* We follow you.

" *Oro.* You do not relish it.

[To Hotman.

" *Hot.* I'm afraid

410

" You'll find it difficult and dangerous.

" *Abo.* Are you the man to find the dangers first?

" You should have giv'n example. Dangerous!

" I thought you had not understood the word;

" You, who would be the head, the hand and heart:

" Sir, I remember you; you can talk well;

" I wo't doubt but you'll maintain your word.

" *Oro.* This fellow is not right, I'll try him further.

[To Aboan.

" The danger will be certain to us all,

" And death most certain in miscarrying.

420

" We must expect no mercy, if we fail:

" Therefore our way must be, not to expect:

" We'll put it out of expectation,

" By death upon the place, or liberty.

" There is no mean, but death, or liberty.

" There's no man here, I hope, but comes prepar'd

" For all that can befall him.

" *Abo.* Death is all:

" In most conditions of humanity

" To be desir'd, but to be shunn'd by none : 430

" The remedy of many, wish of some,

" And certain end of all.

" If there be one among us, who can fear

" The face of death, appearing like a friend,

" (As, in this cause of honour, death must be)

" How will he tremble when he sees him dress'd

" In the wild fury of our enemies,

" In all the terrors of their cruelty ?

" For now, if we should fall into their hands,

" Could they invent a thousand murd'ring ways, 440

" By racking torments, we should feel them all.

" *Hot.* What will become of us ?

" *Oro.* Observe him now. [*To Abo. concerning Hot.*

" I could die, altogether like a man,

" As you, and you, and all of us must do ;

" But who can answer for his bravery

" Upon the rack, where fainting, weary life,

" Hunted thro' every limb, is forc'd to feel

" An agonizing death of all its parts ?

" Who can bear this ? Resolve to be impal'd, 450

" His skin flea'd off, and roasted yet alive ;

" The quiv'ring flesh torn from his broken bones

" By burning pincers ? Who can bear these pains ?

" *Hot.* They are not to be borne.

[*Discovering all the confusion of fear.*

" *Oro.* You see him now, this man of mighty words !

" *Abo.* How his eyes roll !

" *Oro.* He cannot hide his fear.

" I try'd him this way, and have found him out.

" *Abo.* I could not have believ'd it. Such a blaze,

" And not a spark of fire ! 460

" *Oro.* His violence

" Made me suspect ; now I'm convinc'd.

" *Abo.* What shall we do with him ?

" *Oro.* He is not fit——

" *Abo.* Fit ! hang him, he is only fit to be

" Just what he is ; to live and die a slave,

" The base companion of his servile fears.

" *Oro.* We are not safe with him.

" *Abo.* Do you think so ?

" *Oro.* He'll certainly betray us.

470

" *Abo.* That he shan't :

" I can take care of that : I have a way

" To take him off his evidence.

" *Oro.* What way ?

" *Abo.* I'll stop his mouth before you ; stab him here,

" And then let him inform.

[*Going to stab Hotman, Oroonoko holds him.*

" *Oro.* Thou art not mad ?

" *Abo.* I would secure ourselves.

" *Oro.* It sha'not be this way ; nay, cannot be :

" His murder will alarum all the rest,

480

" Make them suspect us of barbarity,

" And, may be, fall away from our design.

" We'll not set out in blood. We have, my friends,

" This night to furnish what we can provide

" For our security and just defence.

" If there be one amongst us, we suspect

" Of baseness, or vile fear, it will become

" Our common care to have an eye on him.

" I wo'not name the man.

" *Abo.* You guess at him.

[*To Hotman.*

" *Oro.* To-morrow, early as the breaking day,

491

" We rendezvous behind the citron-grove.

" That ship secur'd, we may transport ourselves

" To our respective homes. My father's kingdom
 " Shall open her wide arms to take you in,
 " And nurse you for her own, adopt you all,
 " All who will follow me.

" *Omnes.* All, all follow you.

" *Oro.* There I can give you all your liberty ;
 " Bestow its blessings, and secure them yours.
 " There you shall live with honour, as becomes
 " My fellow-sufferers and worthy friends.
 " Thus, if we do succeed : but if we fall
 " In our attempt, 'tis nobler still to die,
 " Than drag the galling yoke of slavery.

500

Exeunt.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter WELLDON " and JACK STANMORE.

" *Welldon.*

" You see, honest Jack, I have been industrious for you ;
 " you must take some pains now to serve yourself.

" *J. Stan.* Gad, Mr. Welldon, I have taken a great deal
 " of pains ; and, if the widow speak honestly, faith and troth,
 " she'll tell you what a painstaker I am.

" *Well.* Fie, fie ! not me. I am her husband, you know.
 " She won't tell me what pains you have taken with her :
 " besides, she takes you for me.

" *J. Stan.* That's true ; I forgot you had married her.
 " But if you knew all. 10

" *Well.* 'Tis no matter for my knowing all, if she does.

" *J. Stan.* Ay, ay, she does know, and more than ever
 " she knew since she was a woman, for the time, I will be
 " bold to say ; for I have done—

" *Well.* The devil take you ; for you'll never have done.

" *J. Stan.* As old as she is, she has a wrinkle behind more

" than she had, I believe; for I have taught her what she
" never knew in her life before.

" *Well.* What care I what wrinkles she has, or what you
" have taught her; if you'll let me advise you, you may; if
" not, you may prate on, and ruin the whole design. 21

" *J. Stan.* Well, well, I have done.

" *Well.* Nobody but your cousin, and you, and I, know
" any thing of this matter. I have married Mrs. Lackitt,
" and put you to bed to her, which she knows nothing of,
" to serve you. In two or three days I'll bring it about so,
" to resign up my claim, and with her consent, quietly to
" you.

" *J. Stan.* But how will you do it? 29

" *Well.* That must be my business. In the mean time, if
" you should make any noise, 'twill come to her ears, and be
" impossible to reconcile her.

" *J. Stan.* Nay, as for that, I know the way to reconcile
" her, I warrant you.

" *Well.* But how will you get her money? I am married
" to her.

" *J. Stan.* That I don't know, indeed.

" *Well.* You must leave it to me, you find. All the pains
" I shall put you to, will be to be silent. You can hold your
" tongue for two or three days? 40

" *J. Stan.* Truly, not well in a matter of this nature. I
" should be very unwilling to lose the reputation of this
" night's work, and the pleasure of telling it.

" *Well.* You must mortify that vanity a little. You will
" have time enough to brag and lie of your manhood, when
" you have her in a bare-fac'd condition to disprove you.

" *J. Stan.* Well, I'll try what I can do; the hopes of her
" money must do it.

" *Well.* You'll come at night again? 'Tis your own bu-
" siness. 50

" *J. Stan.* But you have the credit on't.

" *Well.* 'Twill be your own another day, as the widow says. Send your cousin to me: I want his advice.

" *J. Stan.* I want to be recruited, I am sure. A good breakfast, and to bed. She has rock'd my cradle sufficiently. [Exit.

" *Well.* She would have a husband; and if all be as he says, she has no reason to complain; but there is no relying on what men say upon these occasions: they have the benefit of their bragging, by recommending their abilities to other women: theirs is a trading estate, that lives upon credit, and increases by removing it out of one bank into another. Now poor women have not these opportunities: we must keep our stocks dead by us, at home, to be ready for a purchase, when it comes, a husband, let him be never so dear, and be glad of him: or venture our fortunes abroad on such rotten security, that the principal and interest, nay, very often, our persons are in danger. If the women would agree (which they never will) to call home their effects, how many proper gentlemen would sneak into another way of living, for want of being responsible in this? Then husbands would be cheaper.— Here comes the widow; she'll tell the truth; she'll not bear false witness against her own interest, I know.

Enter Widow LACKITT.

Well. Now, Mrs. Lackitt.

75

Wid. Well, well, Lackitt, or what you will now, now I am married to you. I am very well pleased with what I have done, I assure you.

Well. And with what I have done too, I hope.

Wid. Ah, Mr. Welldon! I say nothing; but you're a dear man, and I did not think it had been in you.

Well. I have more in me than you imagine.

Wid. No, no, you can't have more than I imagine. 'Tis impossible to have more. You have enough for any woman, in an honest way, that I will say for you. 85

Well. Then I find you are satisfied.

Wid. Satisfied! no, indeed, I'm not to be satisfied with you or without you. To be satisfied is to have enough of you: now 'tis a folly to lie; I shall never think I have enough of you. Would you have me fond of you? What do you do to me, to make me love you so well?

Well. Can't you tell what?

Wid. Go, there's no speaking to you. You bring all the blood of one's body into one's face, so you do. Why do you talk so? 95

Well. Why how do I talk?

Wid. You know how: but a little colour becomes me, I believe. How do I look to-day?

Well. Oh, most lovingly, most amiably!

Wid. Nay, this can't be long a secret, I find; I shall discover it by my countenance.

Well. The women will find you out, you look so cheerfully. 103

Wid. But do I, do I really look so cheerfully, so amiably? There is no such paint in the world, as the natural glowing of a complexion. Let them find me out if they please; poor creatures! I pity them. They envy me, I'm sure, and would be glad to mend their looks upon the same occasion. The young gill-flirting girls, forsooth, believe nobody must have a husband but themselves; but I would have them to know there are other things to be taken care of, besides their green-sickness. 112

Well. Ay, sure, or the physicians would have but little practice.

Wid. Mr. Welldon, what must I call you? I must have some pretty fond name or other for you. What shall I call you?

Well. I thought you lik'd my own name.

Wid. Yes, yes, I like it; but I must have a nick-name for you. Most women have nick-names for their husbands.

Well. Cuckold.

121

Wid. No, no; but 'tis very pretty before company: it looks negligent, and is the fashion, you know.

Well. To be negligent of their husbands, it is, indeed.

Wid. Nay, then, I won't be in the fashion; for I can never be negligent of dear Mr. Welldon; and, to convince you, here's something to encourage you not to be negligent of you. [*Gives him a purse and a little casket.*] Five hundred pounds in gold in this, and jewels to the value of five hundred pounds more in this. [*Well. opens the casket.*]

Well. Ay, marry, this will encourage me indeed.

Wid. There are comforts in marrying an elderly woman, Mr. Welldon. Now a young woman would have fancied she had paid you with her person, or had done you the favour.

Well. What, do you talk of young women? You are as young as any of them, in every thing but their folly and ignorance.

Wid. And do you think me so? But I have no reason to suspect you. Was I not seen at your house this morning, do you think?

140

Well. You'll venture again; you'll come at night, I suppose?

Wid. Oh, dear, at night! so soon?

Well. Nay, if you think it so soon—

Wid. Oh, no! 'tis not for that, Mr. Welldon, but—

Well. You won't come then?

Wid. Won't! I don't say I won't: that is not a word for a wife. If you command me—

Well. To please yourself.

Wid. I will come to please you.

150

Well. To please yourself; own it.

Wid. Well, well, to please myself then. You are the strangest man in the world; nothing can 'scape you; you'll to the bottom of every thing.

Enter DANIEL, LUCY following.

Dan. What would you have? What do you follow me for?

Luc. Why mayn't I follow you? I must follow you now, all the world over.

Dan. Hold you, hold you there. Not so far by a mile or two. I have enough of your company already, by'r lady, and something to spare. You may go home to your brother, an' you will; I have no farther to do with you. 161

Wid. Why, Daniel, child, thou art not out of thy wits, sure, art thou?

Dan. Nay, marry, I don't know; but I am very near, I believe; I am alter'd for the worse mightily, since you saw me; and she has been the cause of it there.

Wid. How so, child?

Dan. I told you before what would come on't of putting me to bed to a strange woman; but you would not be said nay. 170

Wid. She is your wife now, child, you must love her.

Dan. Why, so I did, at first.

Wid. But you must love her always.

Dan. Always! I loved her as long as I could, mother, and as long as loving was good, I believe; for I find now I don't care a fig for her.

Luc. Why, you lubberly, slovenly, misbegotten block-head—

Wid. Nay, Mrs. Lucy, say any thing else, and spare not.

But, as to his begetting, that touches me. He is as honestly begotten, though I say it, that he is the worse again.

Luc. I see all good-nature is thrown away upon you.—

Wid. It was so with his father before him. He takes after him. 184

Luc. And therefore I will use you as you deserve, you tony.

Wid. Indeed he deserves bad enough; but don't call him out of his name; his name is Daniel, you know.

Dan. She may call me hermophradite, if she will; for I hardly know whether I'm boy or girl.

Well. A boy, I warrant thee, as long as thou livest.

Dan. Let her call me what she pleases, mother; 'tis not her tongue that I'm afraid of.

Luc. I will make such a beast of thee, such a cuckold!

Wid. Oh, pray, no, I hope! Do nothing rashly, Mrs.

Lucy. 195

Luc. Such a cuckold I will make of thee—

Dan. I had rather be a cuckold, than what you would make of me in a week, I'm sure. I have no more manhood left in me already, than there is, saving the mark, in one of my mother's old under-petticoats here.

Wid. Sirrah, sirrah, meddle with your wife's petticoats, and let your mother's alone, you ungracious bird you.

[Beats him.]

Dan. Why, is the devil in the woman? What have I said now? Do you know, if you were ask'd, I trow? But you are all of a bundle; e'en hang together; he that unties you, makes a rod for his own tail; and so he will find it that has any thing to do with you.

Wid. Ay, rogue enough, you shall find it: I have a rod for your tail still.

Dan. No wife, and I care not." 210

Wid. I'll swinge you into better manners, you booby.

[Beats him off, and exit.]

Well. You have consummated our project upon him.

Luc. Nay, if I have a limb of the fortune, I care not who has the whole body of the fool.

Well. That you shall, and a large one, I promise you.

Luc. Have you heard the news? They talk of an English ship in the river.

Well. I have heard on't, and am preparing to receive it as fast as I can. 219

Luc. There's something the matter too with the slaves, some disturbance or other; I don't know what it is.

Well. So much the better still. We fish in troubled waters. We shall have fewer eyes upon us. Pray, go you home, and be ready to assist me in your part of the design.

Luc. I can't fail in mine. [Exit.

Well. The widow has furnished me, I thank her, to carry it on. Now I have got a wife, 'tis high time to think of getting a husband. I carry my fortune about me; a thousand pounds in gold and jewels. Let me see——'twill be a considerable trust; and I think I shall lay it out to advantage. 231

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. So, Welldon, Jack has told me his success, and his hopes of marrying the widow by your means.

Well. I have strained a point, Stanmore, upon your account, to be serviceable to your family.

Stan. I take it upon my account, and am very much obliged to you. But here we are all in an uproar.

Well. So they say. What's the matter?

Stan. A mutiny among the slaves. Oroonoko is at the head of them. Our governor is gone out, with his rascally militia, against them. What it may come to nobody knows.

Well. For my part, I shall do as well as the rest: but I'm concerned for my sister and cousin, whom I expect in the ship from England.

Stan. There is no danger of them. 243

Well. I have a thousand pounds here, in gold and jewels, for my cousin's use, that I would more particularly take care of. 'Tis too great a sum to venture at home; and I would not have her wronged of it: therefore, to secure it, I think my best way will be to put it into your own keeping.

Stan. You have a very good opinion of my honesty.

[*Takes the purse and casket.*]

Well. I have, indeed. If any thing should happen to me in this bustle, as nobody is secure of accidents, I know you will take my cousin into your protection and care——

Stan. You may be sure on't. 255

Well. If you hear she is dead, as she may be, then I desire you to accept of the thousand pounds as a legacy, and token of my friendship——My sister is provided for.

Stan. Why, you amaze me! but you are never the nearer dying, I hope, for making your will?

Well. Not a jot; but I love to be beforehand with fortune. If she comes safe, this is not a place for a single woman, you know."——Pray, see her married as soon as you can.

Stan. If she be as handsome as her picture, I can promise her a husband.

Well. If you like her when you see her, I wish nothing so much, as to have you marry her yourself.

Stan. From what I have heard of her, and my engagements to you, it must be her fault if I don't. I hope to have her from your own hand. 271

Well. And I hope to give her to you, and all this.

Stan. Ay, ay; hang these melancholy reflections——Your generosity has engaged all my services.

Well. I always thought you worth making a friend.

Stan. You shan't find your good opinion thrown away upon me. I am in your debt, and shall think so as long as I live. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Country. Enter on one side of the stage OROONOKO, ABOAN, with the Slaves. IMOINDA with a bow and quiver. The Women, some leading, others carrying their children upon their backs.

Oro. The women, with their children, fall behind.

Imoinda, you must not expose yourself. 280
Retire, my love; I almost fear for you.

Imo. I fear no danger; life, or death, I will
Enjoy with you.

Oro. My person is your guard.

Abo. "Now, sir, blame yourself;" if you had not prevented my cutting his throat, that coward there had not discovered us. He comes now to upbraid you.

Enter on the other side the Governor, talking to HOTMAN, with his rabble.

Gov. This is the very thing I would have wish'd,
Your honest service to the government [*To Hot.*]
Shall be rewarded with your liberty. 290

Abo. His honest service! call it what it is,
His villany, the service of his fear.
If he pretends to honest services,
Let him stand out, and meet me like a man. [*Advancing.*]

Oro. Hold you; and you who come against us, hold;
I charge you in a general good to all:
And wish I could command you to prevent

The bloody havoc of the murd'ring sword.
I would not urge destruction uncompell'd ;
But, if you follow fate, you find it here. 300
The bounds are set, the limits of our lives ;
Between us lies the gaping gulph of death,
To swallow all. Who first advances——

Enter the Captain, with his crew.

Capt. Here, here, here they are, Governor.
What, seize upon my ship ?
Come, boys, fall on——

[Advancing first, Oroonoko kills him.]

Oro. Thou art fall'n indeed ;
Thy own blood be upon thee.

Gov. Rest it there.
He did deserve his death. “ Take him away.” 310
[The body removed.]

You see, sir, you and those mistaken men
Must be our witnesses, we do not come
As enemies, and thirsting for your blood.
If we desir'd your ruin, the revenge
Of our companion's death had push'd it on.
But that we overlook in a regard
To common safety, and the public good.

Oro. Regard that public good : draw off your men,
And leave us to our fortune. We're resolv'd.

Gov. Resolv'd ! on what ? Your resolutions 320
Are broken, overturn'd, prevented, lost :
“ What fortune now can you raise out of them ?
“ Nay, grant we should draw off, what can you do ?
“ Where can you move ? What more can you resolve,
“ Unless it be to throw yourselves away ?”
Famine must eat you up, if you go on.

You see our numbers could with ease compel
What we request; and what do we request?
Only to save yourselves.

[The women with their children gathering about the men.]

Oro. I'll hear no more. 330

"Women. Hear him, hear him! he takes no care of us."

Gov. To those poor wretches, who have been seduc'd
And led away, to all, and every one
We offer a full pardon—

Oro. Then fall on. *[Preparing to engage.]*

Gov. Lay hold upon't before it be too late;

Pardon and mercy.

[The women clinging about the men, they leave Oroonoko, and fall upon their faces, crying out for pardon.]

Slaves. Pardon, mercy, pardon.

Oro. Let them go all. Now, Governor, I see,
I own the folly of my enterprise, 340

The rashness of this action; and must blush,
Quite through this veil of night, a whitely shame,
To think I could design to make those free,
Who were by nature slaves; wretches design'd
To be their masters dogs, and lick their feet.

"Whip, whip them to the knowledge of your gods

"Your Christian gods, who suffer you to be

"Unjust, dishonest, cowardly, and base;

"And give them your excuse for being so."

I would not live on the same earth with creatures 350
That only have the faces of their kind.

Why should they look like men, who are not so?

When they put off their noble natures for

The grov'ling qualities of downcast beasts,

"I wish they had their tails.

"Abo. Then we should know them."

Oro. We were too few before for victory,
We're still enow to die. [To Imoinda and Aboan.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Gov. Live, royal sir;
Live, and be happy long on your own terms; 360
Only consent to yield, and you shall have
What terms you can propose for you and yours.

Oro. Consent to yield! shall I betray myself?

" Gov. Alas, we cannot fear that your small force,
" The force of two, with a weak woman's arm,
" Should conquer us! I speak in the regard
" And honour of your worth, in my desire
" And forwardness to serve so great a man.
" I would not have it lie upon my thoughts,
" That I was the occasion of the fall 370
" Of such a prince, whose courage, carried on
" In a more noble cause, would well deserve
" The empire of the world.

" Oro. You can speak fair.

" Gov. Your undertaking, though it would have brought
" So great a loss to us, we must all say
" Was generous and noble; and shall be
" Regarded only as the fire of youth,
" That will break out sometimes in gallant souls;
" We'll think it but the natural impulse, 380
" A rash impatience of liberty;
" No otherwise.

" Oro. Think it what you will.

" I was not born to render an account
" Of what I do, to any but myself. [Blan. comes forward."

Blan. I'm glad you have proceeded by fair means.

[To the Governor.

I came to be a mediator.

Gov. Try what you can to work upon him.

Oro. Are you come against me too?

Blan. Is this to come against you?

390

[*Offering his sword to Oroonoko.*

Unarm'd to put myself into your hands?

I come, I hope, to serve you.

Oro. You have serv'd me;

I thank you for't; and I am pleas'd to think

You were my friend, while I had need of one;

But now 'tis past; this farewell, and begone. [*Embraces him.*

Blan. It is not past, and I must serve you still.

"I would make up these breaches, which the sword

"Will widen more, and close us all in love."

Oro. I know what I have done; and I should be

400

A child, to think they ever can forgive.

Forgive! were there but that, I would not live

To be forgiven. Is there a power on earth,

That I can ever need forgiveness from?

Blan. You sha'not need it.

Oro. No, I wo'not need it.

Blan. You see he offers you your own conditions,

For you and yours.

Oro. Must I capitulate?

Precariously compound, on stinted terms,

410

To save my life?

Blan. Sir, he imposes none.

You make them for your own security.

"If your great heart cannot descend to treat,

"In adverse fortune, with an enemy,

"Yet sure your honour's safe; you may accept

"Offers of peace and safety from a friend."

Gov. He will rely on what you say to him.

[*To Blan.*

Offer him what you can, I will confirm
And make all good. Be you my pledge of trust. 420

Blan. I'll answer with my life for all he says.

Gov. Ay, do, and pay the forfeit if you please. [*Aside.*

Blan. Consider, sir; can you consent to throw
That blessing from you, you so hardly found, [*Of Imo.*
And so much valu'd once?

Oro. Imoinda! Oh,
'Tis she that holds me on this argument
Of tedious life! I could resolve it soon,
Were this curs'd being only in debate.
But my Imoinda struggles in my soul: 430
She makes a coward of me, I confess.
I am afraid to part with her in death,
And more afraid of life, to lose her here.

Blan. This way you must lose her. Think upon
The weakness of her sex, made yet more weak
With her condition, requiring rest,
And soft indulging ease, to nurse your hope,
And make you a glad father.

Oro. There I feel
A father's fondness, and a husband's love. 440
They seize upon my heart, strain all its strings,
To pull me to them from my stern resolve.
Husband and father! all the melting art
Of eloquence lives in those soft'ning names.
Methinks I see the babe, with infant hands,
Pleading for life, and begging to be born.
" Shall I forbid its birth, deny him light,
" The heavenly comforts of all cheering light,
" And make the womb the dungeon of his death,
" His bleeding mother his sad monument?" 450
These are the calls of nature, that call loud;

They will be heard, and conquer in their cause;
 He must not be a man who can resist them.
 No, my Imoinda, I will venture all
 To save thee, and that little innocent.
 The world may be a better friend to him,
 Than I have found it. Now I yield myself:

[Gives up his sword.

The conflict's past, and we are in your hands.

[Several men get about Oroonoko and Aboan, and seize them.

Gov. So you shall find you are. Dispose of them, as I
 commanded you. 460

Blan. Good Heav'n forbid! you cannot mean——

Gov. This is not your concern.

[To Blandford, who goes to Oroonoko.

I must take care of you.

[To Imoinda.

Imo. I'm at the end.

Of all my care: here will I die with him. [Holding Oroonoko.

Oro. You shall not force her from me. [He holds her.

Gov. Then I must [They force her from him.

Try other means, and conquer force by force:

Break, cut off his hold, bring her away.

Imo. I do not ask to live, kill me but here.

Oro. Oh, bloody dogs! Inhuman murd'ers! 470

[Imoinda forced out of one door by the Governor and others.

Oroonoko and Aboan hurried out of another. [Exeunt.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter STANMORE, LUCY, and CHARLOTTE.

Stanmore.

" 'Tis strange we cannot hear of him: can nobody give
 " an account of him?"

" *Luc.* Nay, I begin to despair ; I give him for gone.

" *Stan.* Not so, I hope.

" *Luc.* There are so many disturbances in this devilish country ! would we had never seen it !

" *Stan.* This is but a cold welcome for you, Madam, after so troublesome a voyage.

" *Char.* A cold welcome, indeed, sir, without my cousin Welldon : he was the best friend I had in the world. 10

" *Stan.* He was a very good friend of yours indeed, madam.

" *Luc.* They have made him away, murdered him for his money, I believe ; he took a considerable sum out with him ; I know that has been his ruin.

" *Stan.* That has done him no injury, to my knowledge ; for this morning he put into my custody what you speak of ; I suppose, a thousand pounds, for the use of this lady.

" *Char.* I was always obliged to him ; and he has shewn his care of me, in placing my little affairs in such honourable hands. 20

" *Stan.* He gave me a particular charge of you, madam ; very particular, so particular, that you will be surprised when I tell you.

" *Char.* What, pray, sir ?

" *Stan.* I am engaged to get you a husband ; I promised that before I saw you ; and, now I have seen you, you must give me leave to offer you myself.

" *Luc.* Nay, cousin, never be coy upon the matter ; to my knowledge, my brother always designed you for this gentleman. 30

" *Stan.* You hear, madam, he has given me his interest, and 'tis the favour I would have begged of him. Lord ! you are so like him——

" *Char.* That you are obliged to say, that you like me for his sake.

Stan. I should be glad to love you for your own."

Char. If I should consent to the fine things you can say to me, how would you look at last, to find 'em thrown away on an old acquaintance?

Stan. An old acquaintance! 40

Char. Lord, how easily are you men to be imposed upon! I am no cousin newly arrived from England, not I; but the very Welldon you wot of.

Stan. Welldon!

Char. Not murdered, nor made away, as my sister would have you believe: but am, in very good health, your old friend in breeches that was, and now your humble servant in petticoats.

Stan. I am glad we have you again. But what service can you do me in petticoats, pray? 50

Char. Can't you tell what?

Stan. Not I, by my troth: I have found my friend and lost my mistress, it seems, which I did not expect from your petticoats.

Char. Come, come, you have had a friend of your mistress long enough; 'tis high time now to have a mistress of your friend.

Stan. What do you say?

Char. I am a woman, sir.

Stan. A woman! 60

Char. As arrant a woman as you would have had me but now, I assure you.

Stan. And at my service?

Char. If you have any for me in petticoats.

Stan. Yes, yes, I shall find you employment.

Char. You wonder at my proceeding, I believe.

Stan. 'Tis a little extraordinary, indeed.

Char. I have taken some pains to come into your favour.

" *Stan.* You might have had it cheaper a great deal. 69

" *Char.* I might have married you in the person of my English cousin, but could not consent to cheat you, even in the thing I had a mind to.

" *Stan.* 'Twas done as you do every thing."

Char. I need not tell you, I made that little plot, and carried it on only for this opportunity. I was resolved to see whether you liked me as a woman, or not: if I had found you indifferent, I would have endeavoured to have been so too: but you say you like me, and therefore I have ventured to discover the truth. 79

Stan. Like you! I like you so well, that I am afraid you won't think marriage a proof on't: shall I give you any other?

Char. No, no, I'm inclined to believe you, and that shall convince me. At more leisure I'll satisfy you how I come to be in man's clothes; for no ill, I assure you, though I have happened to play the rogue in 'em. " They have assisted me in marrying my sister, and have gone a great way in befriending your cousin Jack with the widow. Can you forgive me for pimping for your family?" 89

Enter JACK STANMORE.

Stan. So, Jack, what news with you?

J. Stan. I am the forepart of the widow you know; she's coming after, with the body of the family, the young 'squire, in her hand, my son-in-law that is to be, with the help of Mr. Welldon.

Char. Say you so, sir? [Clapping Jack upon the back.

Enter Widow LACKITT, with her son DANIEL.

Wid. So, Mrs. Lucy, I have brought him about again; I have chastised him; I have made him as supple as a glove

for your wearing, to pull on, or throw off, at your pleasure. Will you ever rebel again? will you, sirrah? But, come, come, down on your marrow-bones, and ask her forgiveness. [Daniel kneels.] Say after me: Pray forsooth, wife. 101

Dan. Pray forsooth, wife.

Luc. Well, well, this is a day of good-nature, and so I take you into favour: but first take the oath of allegiance. [He kisses her hand and rises.] If ever you do so again——

Dan. Nay, marry, if I do, I shall have the worst on't.

Luc. Here's a stranger, forsooth, would be glad to be known to you, a sister of mine, pray salute her.

[Starts at Charlotte.

Wid. Your sister, Mrs. Lucy! What do you mean? this is your brother, Mr. Welldon: do you think I do not know Mr. Welldon? 111

Luc. Have a care what you say: this gentleman's about marrying her: you may spoil all.

Wid. Fiddle, faddle, what! you would put a trick upon me.

Char. No, faith, widow, the trick is over, it has taken sufficiently, and now I will teach you the trick, to prevent your being cheated another time.

Wid. How! cheated, Mr. Welldon!

Char. Why, aye, you will always take things by the wrong handle: I see you will have me Mr. Welldon: I grant you, I was Mr. Welldon a little while, to please you or so: but Mr. Stanmore here has persuaded me into a woman again.

Wid. A woman! Pray let me speak with you. [Drawing her aside.] You are not in earnest, I hope? a woman!

Char. Really a woman.

Wid. Gads my life! I could not be cheated in every thing: I know a man from a woman at these years, or the devil is in't. Pray, did not you marry me?

Char. You would have it so,

Wid. And did not I give you a thousand pounds this morning?

Char. Yes, indeed, 'twas more than I deserved: but you had your pennyworth for your penny, I suppose; you seemed to be pleased with your bargain.

Wid. A rare bargain I have made on't truly! I have laid out my money to a fine purpose upon a woman.

Char. You would have a husband, and I provided for you as well as I could.

Wid. Yes, yes, you have provided for me. 139

Char. And you have paid me very well for't, I thank you.

Wid. 'Tis very well! I may be with child too, for aught I know, and may go look for the father.

Char. Nay, if you think so, 'tis time to look about you, indeed. "Ev'n make up the matter as well as you can, (I advise you as a friend) and let us live neighbourly and lovingly together.

"*Wid.* I have nothing else for it that I know of now."

Char. For my part, Mrs. Lackitt, your thousand pounds will engage me not to laugh at you. Then, my sister is married to your son; he is to have half your estate, I know; and indeed they may live upon it, very comfortably to themselves, and very creditably to you. 152

Wid. Nay, I can blame nobody but myself.

Char. You have enough for a husband still, and that you may bestow upon honest Jack Stanmore.

Wid. Is he the man then?

Char. He is the man you are obliged to.

J. Stan. Yes, faith, widow, I am the man: I have done fairly by you, you find: you know what you have to trust to before-hand. 160

Wid. Well, well, I see you will have me; even marry me, and make an end of the business.

Stan. Why that's well said : now we are all agreed, and all well provided for.

Enter a Servant to STANMORE.

Serv. Sir, Mr. Blandford desires you to come to him, and bring as many of our friends as you can with you.

Stan. I come to him. You shall all go along with me. Come, young gentleman, marriage is the fashion you see ; you must like it now.

Dan. If I don't, how shall I help myself ? 170

Luc. Nay, you may hang yourself in the noose, if you please, but you will never get out on't with struggling.

Dan. Come then, let's e'en jog on in the old road.

Cuckold, or worse, I must now be contented :

I'm not the first has marry'd and repented.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Governor, with BLANDFORD and Planters.

Blan. Have you no reverence for future fame ?
No awe upon your actions, from the tongues,
The cens'ring tongues of men, that will be free ?

" If you confess humanity, believe

" There is a God, or Devil, to reward

180

" Our doings here : do not provoke your fate.

" The hand of Heav'n is arm'd against these crimes,

" With hotter thunderbolts, prepar'd to shoot,

" And nail you to the earth, a sad example ;

" A monument of faithless infamy."

*Enter STANMORE, J. STANMORE, CHARLOTTE, LUCY,
Widow, and DANIEL.*

So, Stanmore, you, I know, the women too
Will join with me : 'tis Oroonoko's cause,

A lover's cause, a wretched woman's cause,
That will become your intercession. [To the women.]

1st Plant. Never mind 'em, Governor; he ought to be made
an example, for the good of the plantation. 191

2d Plant. Ay, ay, 'twill frighten the negroes from attempt-
ing the like again.

1st Plant. What, rise against their lords and masters! at
this rate no man is safe from his own slaves.

2d Plant. No, no more he is. Therefore, one and all, Go-
vernor, we declare for hanging.

Omn. Plant. Ay, ay, hang him, hang him.

Wid. What, hang him? Oh, forbid it, Governor.

Char. Luc. We all petition for him. 200

J. Stan. They are for a holiday: guilty, or not, is not the
business, hanging is their sport.

Blan. We are not sure so wretched, to have these,
The rabble, judge for us: the hanging crowd,
The arbitrary guard of fortune's power,
Who wait to catch the sentence of her frowns,
And hurry all to ruin she condemns.

Stan. So far from farther wrong, that 'tis a shame
He should be where he is. Good Governor
Order his liberty: he yielded up 210
Himself, his all, at your discretion.

Blan. Discretion! no, he yielded on your word;
And I am made the cautionary pledge,
The gage and hostage of your keeping it.
Remember, sir, he yielded on your word;
Your word! which honest men will think should be
The last resort of truth, and trust on earth;
There's no appeal beyond it but to Heav'n.

" An oath is a recognizance to Heav'n,
" Binding us over in the courts above, 220

" To plead to the indictment of our crimes,
 " That those who 'scape this world should suffer there.
 " But in the common intercourse of men,
 " (Where the dread majesty is not invoc'd,
 " His honour not immediately concern'd,
 " Not made a party in our interests)
 " Our word is all to be rely'd upon."

Wid. Come, come, you'll be as good as your word, we know. 229

Stan. He's out of all power of doing any harm now, if he were disposed to it.

Char. But he is not disposed to it.

Blan. To keep him where he is, will make him soon
Find out some desperate way to liberty :
He'll hang himself, or dash out his mad brains.

Char. Pray try him by gentle means : we'll all be sureties for him.

Omn. All, all.

" *Luc.* We will all answer for him now." 239

Gov. Well, you will have it so ; do what you please, just what you will with him, I give you leave. [*Exit.*

Blan. We thank you, sir ; this way ; pray come with me.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

OROONOKO upon his back, his legs and arms stretched out, and chained to the ground. Enter BLANDFORD, STANMORE, &c.

Blan. Oh, miserable sight ! help, every one,
Assist me all, to free him from his chains.

[*They help him up, and bring him forward, looking down.*
Most injur'd prince ! how shall we clear ourselves ?

We cannot hope you will vouchsafe to hear,
Or credit what we say in the defence
And cause of our suspected innocence.

Stan. We are not guilty of your injuries,
No way consenting to 'em ; but abhor,
Abominate, and loath this cruelty.

250

“ *Blan.* It is our curse ; but make it not our crime ;
“ A heavy curse upon us, that we must,
“ Share any thing in common, ev'n the light,
“ The elements and seasons, with such men,
“ Whose principles, like the fam'd dragon's teeth,
“ Scatter'd and sown, would shoot a harvest up
“ Of fighting mischiefs to confound themselves,
“ And ruin all about 'em.

“ *Stan.* Profligates !
“ Whose bold Titanian impiety
“ Would once again pollute their mother earth,
“ Force her to teem with her old monstrous brood
“ Of giants, and forget the race of men.

260

“ *Blan.* We are not so : believe us innocent.
“ We come prepar'd with all our services,
“ To offer a redress of your base wrongs.
“ Which way shall we employ 'em ?

“ *Stan.* Tell us, sir :
“ If there is any thing that can atone ?

270

“ But nothing can : that may be some amends”——

Oro. If you would have me think you are not all
Confederates, all accessary to,
The base injustice of your governor ;
If you would have me live, as you appear
Concern'd for me ; if you would have me live
To thank and bless you, there is yet a way
To tie me ever to your honest love :

Bring my Imoinda to me ; give me her,
To charm my sorrows, and, if possible, 280
I'll sit down with my wrongs, never to rise
Against my fate, or think of vengeance more.

Blan. Be satisfy'd, you may depend upon us,
We'll bring her safe to you and suddenly.

Char. We will not leave you in so good a work.

Wid. No, no, we'll go with you.

Blan. In the mean time
Endeavour to forget, sir, and forgive ;
And hope a better fortune. [Exeunt.

Oro. [Alone.] Forget ! forgive ! I must indeed forget,
When I forgive : but while I am a man, 291

In flesh, that bears the living marks of shame,
The print of his dishonourable chains,
My memory still rousing up my wrongs,
I never can forgive this governor,
This villain ; the disgrace of trust and place,
And just contempt of delegated power.
What shall I do ? if I declare myself,
I know him, he will sneak behind his guard
Of followers, and brave me in his fears. 300

Else, lion-like, with my devouring rage,
I would rush on him, fasten on his throat,
Tear a wide passage to his treacherous heart,
And that way lay him open to the world. [Pausing.

If I should turn his Christian arts on him,
Promise him, speak him fair, flatter and creep
With fawning steps, to get within his faith,
I could betray him then, as he has me.
But am I sure by that to right myself ?
Lying's a certain mark of cowardice ; 310
And, when the tongue forgets its honesty,

The heart and hand may drop their functions too,
And nothing worthy be resolv'd or done.

"The man must go together, bad, or good :

"In one part frail, he soon grows weak in all.

"Honour should be concern'd in honour's cause,

"That is not to be cur'd by contraries,

"As bodies are, whose health is often drawn

"From rankest poisons." Let me but find out

An honest remedy, I have the hand,

A ministring hand, that will apply it home.

320

[Exit.

SCENE III.

The Governor's House. Enter Governor.

Gov. I would not have her tell me, she consents ;

In favour of the sex's modesty,

That still should be presum'd ; because there is

A greater impudence in owning it,

Than in allowing all that we can do.

"This truth I know, and yet against myself

"(So unaccountable are lovers ways)

"I talk, and lose the opportunities,

"Which love, and she, expects I should employ.

330

"Ev'n she expects : " for when a man has said

All that is fit, to save the decency,

The women know the rest is to be done,

I wo't not disappoint her.

[Going.

*Enter BLANDFORD, the STANMORES, DANIEL, Mrs. LACK-
ITT, CHARLOTTE, and LUCY.*

Wid. Oh, Governor, I'm glad we've lit upon you.

Gov. Why, what's the matter ?

Char. Nay, nothing extraordinary. But one good action draws on another. You have given the prince his freedom : now we come a-begging for his wife ; you won't refuse us.

Gov. Refuse you ! No, no ; what have I to do to refuse you ? 341

Wid. You won't refuse to send her to him, she means.

Gov. I send her to him ?

Wid. We have promised him to bring her.

Gov. You do very well ; 'tis kindly done of you : ev'n carry her to him, with all my heart.

Luc. You must tell us where she is.

Gov. I tell you ! why, don't you know ?

Blan. Your servant says she's in the house. 349

Gov. No, no ; I brought her home at first, indeed : but I thought it would not look well to keep her here ; I removed her in the hurry, only to take care of her. What ! she belongs to you : I have nothing to do with her.

Char. But where is she now, sir ?

Gov. Why, faith, I can't say certainly : you'll hear of her at Parham-house, I suppose : there, or thereabouts : I think I sent her there.

Blan. I'll have an eye on him. [Aside.

[Exeunt all but the Governor.

Gov. I have ly'd myself into a little time,
And must employ it ; " they'll be here again : 360
" But I must be before 'em."

[Going out, he meets Imoinda, and seizes her.

Are you come ?

I'll court no longer for a happiness

That is in my own keeping : you may still

Refuse to grant, so I have pow'r to take.

The man that asks deserves to be deny'd.

[She disengages one hand, and draws his sword from his side

upon him; Governor starts and retires; Blandford enters behind him.

Imo. He does indeed, that asks unworthily.

Blan. You hear her, sir, that asks unworthily.

Gov. You are no judge.

Blan. I am of my own slave.

370

Gov. Begone, and leave us.

Blan. When you let her go.

Gov. To fasten upon you.

Blan. I must defend myself.

Imo. Help, murder, help!

[Imoinda retreats towards the door, favoured by Blandford; when they are closed, she throws down the sword, and runs out. Governor takes up his sword, they fight, close, and fall, Blandford upon him. Servants enter, and part 'em.]

Gov. She sha'not 'scape me so, I've gone too far,

Not to go farther. Curse on my delay:

But yet she is, and shall be in my power.

Blan. Nay, then it is the war of honesty;

I know you, and will save you from yourself.

380

Gov. All come along with me.

[Exeunt.]

Enter OROONOKO.

Oro. To honour bound, and yet a slave to love!

I am distracted by their rival pow'rs,

And both will be obeyed. O great revenge!

Thou raiser and restorer of fall'n fame!

Let me not be unworthy of thy aid,

For stopping in thy course: I still am thine;

But can't forget I am Imoinda's too.

She calls me from my wrongs to rescue her.

No man condemn me, who has never felt

390

A woman's power, or try'd the force of love:

" All tempers yield and soften in those fires ;
 " Our honours, interests resolving down,
 " Run in the gentle current of our joys ;
 " But not to sink and drown our memory ;
 " We mount again to action, like the sun,
 " That rises from the bosom of the sea,
 " To run his glorious race of light anew,
 " And carry on the world." Love, love will be
 My first ambition, and my fame the next,

400

Enter ABOAN bloody.

My eyes are turn'd against me, and combine
 With my sworn enemies to represent
 This spectacle of horror. Aboan !
 " My ever faithful friend !"

Abo. I have no name

That can distinguish me from the vile earth,
 To which I'm going : a poor abject worm,
 That crawl'd a while upon the bustling world,
 And now am trampled to my dust again.

Oro. I see thee gash'd and mangled !

410

Abo. Spare my shame

To tell how they have us'd me ; but believe
 The hangman's hand would have been merciful,
 Do not you scorn me, sir, to think I can
 Intend to live under this infamy.

I do not come for pity, to complain.

I've spent an honourable life with you,—

The earliest servant of your rising fame,

And would attend it with my latest care ;

My life was yours, and so shall be my death,

420

You must not live—

Bending and sinking, I have dragg'd my steps

Thus far, to tell you that you cannot live :
To warn you of those ignominious wrongs,
Whips, rods, and all the instruments of death
Which I have felt, and are prepar'd for you.
This was the duty that I had to pay :
'Tis done ; and, now, I beg to be discharg'd.

Oro. What shall I do for thee ?

Abo. My body tires,

430

And wo't not bear me off to liberty ;
I shall again be taken, made a slave.
A sword, a dagger, yet would rescue me.
I have not strength to go and find out death,
You must direct him to me.

Oro. Here he is,

[Gives him a dagger.

The only present I can make thee now.
And, next the honourable means of life,
I would bestow the honest means of death.

Abo. I cannot stay to thank you. If there is

440

A being after this, I shall be yours
In the next world, your faithful slave again.
This is to try. [Stabs himself.] I had a living sense
Of all your royal favours ; but this last
Strikes through my heart. I wo't not say farewell,
For you must follow me.

[Dies.

Oro. In life and death

The guardian of my honour ! Follow thee !
I should have gone before thee ; then perhaps
Thy fate had been prevented. All his care
Was to preserve me from the barbarous rage
That worry'd him, only for being mine.
Why, why, ye gods ! why am I so accurs'd,
That it must be a reason of your wrath,
A guilt, a crime sufficient to the fate

450

Of any one, but to belong to me ?
 My friend has found it out, and my wife will soon :
 My wife ! the very fear's too much for life.
 I can't support it. Where's Imoinda ? Oh !

[Going out, she meets him, running into his arms.]

Thou bosom softness ! Down of all my cares ! 460
 I could recline my thoughts upon this breast
 To a forgetfulness of all my griefs,
 And yet be happy ; but it wo't not be.
 Thou art disorder'd, pale, and out of breath !
 If fate pursues thee, find a shelter here.
 What is it thou wouldst tell me ?

Imo. 'Tis in vain to call him villain.

Oro. Call him Governor : is it not so ?

Imo. There's not another, sure.

Oro. Villain's the common name of mankind here ;

But his most properly. What ! what of him ? 471
 I fear to be resolv'd, and must enquire.

He had thee in his power.

Imo. I blush to think it.

Oro. Blush ! to think what ?

Imo. That I was in his power.

Oro. He could not use it ?

Imo. What can't such men do ?

Oro. But did he ? Durst he ?

Imo. What he cou'd, he dar'd. 480

Oro. His own gods damn him then ; for ours have none,
 No punishment for such unheard-of crime.

Imo. This monster, cunning in his flatteries,
 When he had wearied all his useless arts,
 Leap'd out, fierce as a beast of prey, to seize me,
 I trembled, fear'd ;

Oro. I fear and tremble now.
What could preserve thee? What deliver thee?

Imo. That worthy man you us'd to call your friend.

Oro. Blandford? 490

Imo. Came in, and sav'd me from his rage.

Oro. He was a friend indeed, to rescue thee!

And, for his sake, I'll think it possible
A Christian may be yet an honest man.

Imo. Oh, did you know what I have struggled through,
To save me yours, sure you would promise me
Never to see me forc'd from you again.

Oro. To promise thee! Oh, do I need to promise?
But there is now no farther use of words.
Death is security for all our fears. 500

[*Shews Aboan's body on the floor.*]

And yet I cannot trust him.

Imo. Aboan!

Oro. Mangled and torn, resolv'd to give me time
To fit myself for what I must expect,
Groan'd out a warning to me, and expir'd.

Imo. For what you must expect?

Oro. Would that were all!

Imo. What, to be butcher'd thus——

Oro. Just as thou seest.

Imo. By barb'rous hands, to fall at last their prey? 510

Oro. I have run the race with honour; shall I now
Lag, and be overtaken at the goal?

Imo. No.

Oro. I must look back to thee. [*Tenderly.*]

Imo. You sha'not need,
I am always present to your purpose, say,
Which way would you dispose me?

“ Oro. Have a care!

- “ Thou’rt on a precipice, and dost not see
“ Whither that question leads thee. Oh! too soon 520
“ Thou dost enquire what the assembled gods
“ Have not determin’d, and will latest doom.
“ Yet this I know of fate, this is most certain,
“ I cannot, as I would, dispose of thee ;
“ And, as I ought, I dare not. Oh, Imoinda !
“ *Imo.* Alas, that sigh! Why do you tremble so!
“ Nay, then ’tis bad indeed, if you can weep.
“ *Oro.* My heart runs over, if my gushing eyes
“ Betray a weakness which they never knew.
“ Believe, thou only, thou couldst cause these tears : 530
“ The gods themselves conspire with faithless men
“ To our destruction.
“ *Imo.* Heav’n and earth our foes !
“ *Oro.* It is not always granted to the great
“ To be most happy : if the angry Pow’rs
“ Repent their favours, let ’em take ’em back :
“ The hopes of empire which they gave my youth,
“ By making me a prince, I here resign.
“ Let ’em quench in me all those glorious fires,
“ Which kindled at their beams : that lust of fame, 540
“ That fever of ambition, restless still,
“ And burning with the sacred thirst of sway,
“ Which they inspir’d, to qualify my fate,
“ And make me fit to govern under them,
“ Let ’em extinguish. I submit myself
“ To their high pleasure, and devoted bow
“ Yet lower, to continue still a slave,
“ Hopeless of liberty ; and, if I could
“ Live after it, would give up honour too,
“ To satisfy their vengeance, to avert
“ This only curse, the curse of losing thee. 550

- " *Imo.* If Heav'n cou'd be appeas'd, these cruel men
 " Are not to be entreated, or believ'd :
 " Oh, think on that, and be no more deceiv'd.
 " *Oro.* What can we do ?
 " *Imo.* Can I do any thing ?
 " *Oro.* But we were born to suffer.
 " *Imo.* Suffer both ;
 " Both die, and so prevent 'em.
 " *Oro.* By thy death ! — 560
 " Oh, let me hunt my travell'd thoughts again ;
 " Range the wide waste of desolate despair ;
 " Start any hope. Alas, I lose myself !
 " 'Tis pathless, dark, and barren all to me.
 " Thou art my only guide, my light of life,
 " And thou art leaving me : send out thy beams
 " Upon the wing ; let 'em fly all around.
 " Discover every way : is there a dawn,
 " A glimmering of comfort ? The great God,
 " That rises on the world, must shine on us. 570
 " *Imo.* And see us set before him.
 " *Oro.* Thou bespeak'st
 " And go'st before me.
 " *Imo.* So I would in love,
 " In the dear unsuspected part of life,
 " In death for love. Alas ! what hopes for me !
 " I was preserv'd but to acquit myself,
 " To beg to die with you.
 " *Oro.* And canst thou ask it ?
 " I never durst enquire into myself 580
 " About thy fate, and thou resolv'st it all.
 " *Imo.* Alas, my lord ! my fate's resolv'd in yours.
 " *Oro.* Oh ! keep thee there : let not thy virtue shrink
 " From my support, and I will gather strength,

" Fast as I can, to tell thee——

" *Imo.* I must die :

" I know 'tis fit, and I can die with you.

" *Oro.* Oh, thou hast banish'd hence a thousand fears,

" Which sicken'd at my heart, and quite unman'd me.

" *Imo.* Your fear's for me, I know ; you fear my strength,

" And could not overcome your tenderness, 591

" To pass this sentence on me : and indeed

" There you were kind, as I have always found you,

" As you have ever been ; for though I am

" Resign'd, and ready to obey my doom,

" Methinks it should not be pronounc'd by you.

" *Oro.* Oh, that was all the labour of my grief !

" My heart and tongue forsook me in the strife.

" I never could pronounce it.

" *Imo.* I have for you, for both of us. 600

" *Oro.* Alas, for me, my death

" I could regard as the last scene of life,

" And act it through with joy, to have it done.

" But then to part with thee——

" *Imo.* 'Tis hard to part ;

" But parting thus, as the most happy must,

" Parting in death, makes it the easier.

" You might have thrown me off, forsaken me,

" And my misfortunes—that had been a death

" Indeed, of terror, to have trembled at. 610

" *Oro.* Forsaken ! thrown thee off !

" *Imo.* But 'tis a pleasure more than life can give,

" That with unconquer'd passion, to the last,

" You struggle still, and fain would hold me to you.

" *Oro.* Ever, ever ; and let those stars, which are my
enemies,

" Witness against me in the other world,

" If I would leave this mansion of my bliss,
 " To be the brightest ruler of their skies.
 " Oh, that we could incorporate, be one, [*Embracing her.*
 " One body, as we have been long one mind ! 620
 " That, blended so, we might together mix,
 " And, losing thus our being to the world,
 " Be only found to one another's joys.

" *Imo.* Is this the way to part ?

" *Oro.* Which is the way ?

" *Imo.* The god of love is blind, and cannot find it.

" But, quick, make haste ; our enemies have eyes

" To find us out, and shew us the worst way

" Of parting. Think on them.

" *Oro.* Why dost thou wake me ?

630

" *Imo.* Oh, no more of love !

" For if I listen to you, I shall quite

" Forget my dangers, and desire to live."

" I can't live yours. [*Takes up the dagger.*"]

Oro. " There all the stings of death

" Are shot into my heart."—What shall I do ?

Imo. This dagger will instruct you. [*Gives it him.*

Oro. Ah ! this dagger !

Like fate, it points me to the horrid deed.

Imo. Strike ! strike it home ; and bravely save us both.

There is no other safety.

640

Oro. It must be——

But first a dying kiss——

[*Kisses her*

This last embrace——

[*Embracing her.*

And now——

Imo. I'm ready.

Oro. Oh ! where shall I strike ?

Is there the smallest grain of that lov'd body

That is not dearer to me than my eyes,

My bosom'd heart, and all the life-blood there?
 Bid me cut off these limbs, hew off these hands, 650
 Dig out these eyes, (tho' I would keep them last
 To gaze upon thee)—but to murder thee,
 The joy, the charm of every ravish'd sense!—
 My wife!—forbid it nature.

Imo. 'Tis your wife,
 Who on her knees conjures you. Oh, in time,
 Prevent those mischiefs that are falling on us!
 You may be hurried to a shameful death,
 And I too dragg'd to the vile governor.
 Then may I cry aloud. When you are gone, 660
 Where shall I find a friend again to save me?

Oro. It will be so. Thou unexampled virtue!
 Thy resolution has recover'd mine.
 And now prepare thee.

Imo. Thus, with open arms,
 I welcome you and death.

*[He drops his dagger as he looks on her, and throws himself
 on the ground.]*

Oro. I cannot bear it.
 Oh, let me dash against the rock of fate,
 Dig up this earth, and tear her bowels out,
 To make a grave, deep as the centre down, 670
 To swallow wide, and bury us together!
 It wo't be. Oh, then some pitying god,
 (If there be one a friend to innocence)
 Find yet a way to lay her beauties down
 Gently in death, and save me from her blood.

Imo. Oh, rise! 'tis more than death to see you thus.
 I'll ease your love, and do the deed myself—

[She takes up the dagger, he rises in haste to take it from her.]

Oro. Oh, hold! I charge thee, hold.

Imo. Tho' I must own
It would be nobler for us both from you.

689

Oro. Oh, for a whirlwind's wing, to hurry us
To yonder cliff, which frowns upon the flood,
That, in embraces lock'd, we might plunge in,
And perish thus in one another's arms.

Imo. Alas! what shout is that?

Oro. I see them coming.
They sha'not overtake us. This last kiss,
And now, farewell.

Imo. Farewell! farewell, for ever!

Oro. I'll turn my face away, and do it so.— 690
Now, are you ready.

Imo. Now. But do not grudge me
The pleasure, in my death, of a last look—
Pray, look upon me——Now I'm satisfied.

Oro. So fate must be by this.

[*Going to stab her, he stops short; she lays her hand on his,
in order to give the blow.*]

Imo. Nay, then I must assist you.
And since it is the common cause of both,
'Tis just that both should be employed in it.
Thus, thus, 'tis finish'd; and I bless my fate, [*Stabs herself.*
That, where I liv'd, I die—in these lov'd arms. [*Dies.*

Oro. She's gone. And now all's at an end with me. 701
Soft, lay her down—Oh, we will part no more!

[*Then throws himself by her.*

But let me pay the tribute of my grief,
A few sad tears to thy lov'd memory,
And then I follow—[*Weeps over her*] [*Shouts.*
But I stay too long. [*A noise again.*

The noise comes nearer. Hold, before I go
There's something would be done. It shall be so,
And then, Imoinda, I'll come all to thee. [*Rises.*

BLANDFORD *and his party enter before the Governor and his party,
swords drawn on both sides,*

Gov. You strive in vain to save him; he shall die. 710

Blan. Not while we can defend him with our lives.

Gov. Where is he?

Oro. Here is the wretch whom you would have.

Put up your swords, and let not civil broils

Engage you in the cursed cause of one

Who cannot live, and now entreats to die.

This object will convince you.

Blan. 'Tis his wife.

[They gather about the body.

Alas, there was no other remedy!

Gov. Who did the bloody deed?

720

Oro. The deed was mine——

Bloody I know it is; and I expect

Your laws should tell me so. Thus, self-condemn'd,

I do resign myself into your hands,

The hands of justice——But I hold the sword

For you——and for myself.

*[Stabs the Governor and himself, then throws himself by
Imoinda's body.*

“Stan. He has killed the Governor and stabbed himself.”

Oro. 'Tis as it should be now—I have sent his ghost
To be a witness of that happiness

In the next world, which he deny'd us here.

[Dies.

Blan. I hope there is a place of happiness

731

In the next world for such exalted virtue.

Pagan or unbeliever, yet he liv'd

To all he knew; and, if he went astray,

There's mercy still above to set him right.

But Christians, guided by the heavenly ray,

Have no excuse if we mistake our way.

[Exeunt.

EPILOGUE.

*YOU see we try all shapes, and shifts, and arts,
To tempt your favours, and regain your hearts.
We weep and laugh, join grief and mirth together,
Like rain and sunshine mix'd, in April weather.
Your diff'rent tastes divide our poet's cares;
One foot the sock, t'other the buskin wears.
Thus, while he strives to please, he's forc'd to do't,
Like Volscious, hip hop, in a single boot.
Critics, he knows, for this may damn his books:
But he makes feasts for friends, and not for cooks.
Though errant knights of late no favour find,
Sure you will be to ladies errant kind.
To follow fame, knight errants make profession:
We damsels fly to save our reputation:
So they their valour shew, we our discretion.
To lands of monsters, and fierce beasts they go:
We to those islands, where rich husbands grow:
Though they're no monsters, we may make them so.
If they're of English growth, they'll bear't with patience:
But save us from a spouse of Oroonoko's nations.
Then bless your stars, you happy London wives,
Who love at large, each day, yet keep your lives;
Nor envy poor Imoinda's doating blindness,
Who thought her husband kill'd her out of kindness.
Death with a husband ne'er had shewn such charms,
Had she once dy'd within a lover's arms.
Her error was from ignorance proceeding;
Poor soul! she wanted some of our town-breeding:*

EPILOGUE.

*Forgive this Indian fondness of her spouse :
Their law no Christian liberty allows ;
Alas, they make a conscience of their vows !
If virtue in a Heathen be a fault,
Then damn the heathen school where she was taught.
She might have learnt to cuckold, jilt and sham,
Had Covent-Garden been in Surinam.*

7 JU 52

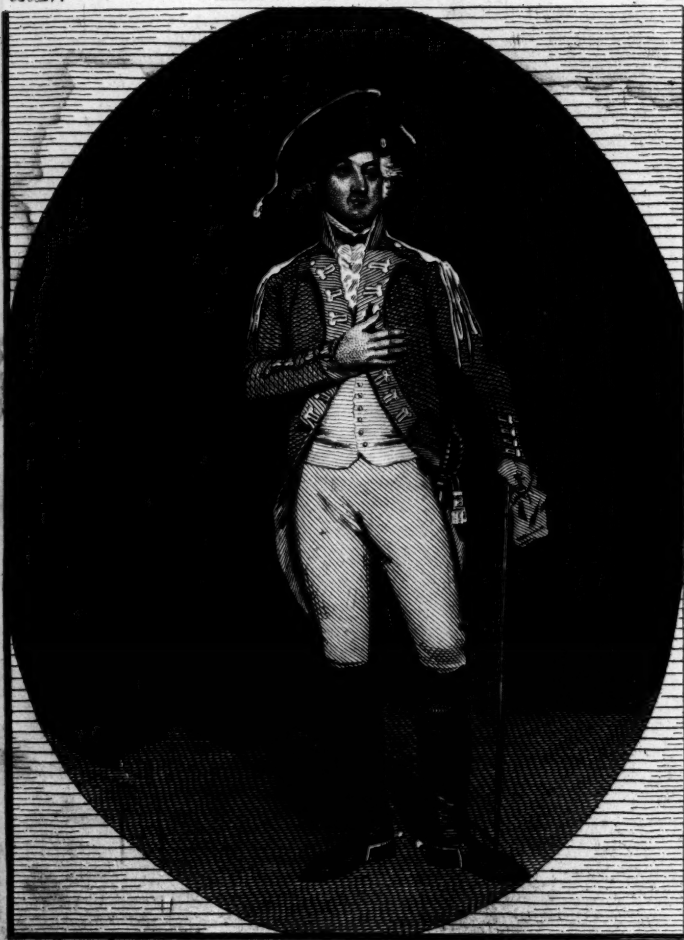


7 JU 52

Act IV.

THE WEST INDIAN.

Scene X.



De Wille pinx.

Andres sc.

M^R JOHNSTONE as MAJOR O'FLAHARTY.

Mine is not the Country of dishonour

London. Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand, June 23. 1732.



Burney del.

A. Smith sc.

London. Printed for J. Ball, British Library Strand, June 23. 1792.

7 JU 52

THE
WEST INDIAN.

A
COMEDY.

BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND, ESQ.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of JOHN BELL,
British Library, STRAND,
Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

M DCC XCII.



PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. REDDISH.

*CRITICS, hark forward! noble game and new;
A fine West Indian started full in view:
Hot as the soil, the clime which gave him birth,
You'll run him on a burning scent to earth;
Yet don't devour him in his hiding place;
Bag him, he'll serve you for another chase;
For sure that country has no feeble claim,
Which swells your commerce, and supports your fame.
And in this humble sketch, we hope you'll find,
Some emanations of a noble mind;
Some little touches, which, tho' void of art,
May find perhaps their way into the heart.
Another hero your excuse implores,
Sent by your sister kingdom to your shores;
Doom'd by Religion's too severe command,
To fight for bread against his native land:
A brave, unthinking, animated rogue,
With here and there a touch upon the brogue;
Laugh, but despise him not, for on his lip
His errors lie; his heart can never trip.
Others there are—but may we not prevail
To let the gentry tell their own plain tale?
Shall they come in? They'll please you, if they can;
If not, condemn the bard—but spare the Man.
For speak, think, act, or write in angry times,
A wish to please is made the worst of crimes;
Dire slander now with black envenom'd dart,
Stands ever arm'd to stab you to the heart.*

Rouse, Britons, rouse, for honour of your isle,
Your old good humour; and be seen to smile.
You say we write not like our fathers—true,
Nor were our fathers half so strict as you,
Damn'd not each error of the poet's pen,
But, judging man, remember'd they were men.
Aw'd into silence by the time's abuse,
Sleeps many a wise, and many a witty muse:
We that for mere experiment come out,
Are but the light arm'd rangers on the scout:
High on Parnassus' lofty summit stands
The immortal camp; there lie the chosen bands.
But give fair quarter to us puny elves,
The giants then will sally forth themselves;
With wit's sharp weapons vindicate the age,
And drive ev'n Arthur's magic from the Stage.

Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

STOCKWELL,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
BELCOUR,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Bannister, Jun.
Captain DUDLEY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Packer.
CHARLES DUDLEY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Barrymore.
Major O'FLAHERTY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Moody.
STUKELY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Benson.
FULMER,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Suett.
VARLAND,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Baddeley.
Sailor,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Jones.
Servant to Stockwell,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Alfred.
Servant to Lady Rusport,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Lyons.

Women.

Lady RUSPORT,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Hopkins.
CHARLOTTE RUSPORT,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Goodall.
LOUISA, daughter to Dudley,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Kemble.
Mrs. FULMER,	-	-	-	-	-	Miss Tidswell.
LUCY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Shaw.
Housekeeper belonging to Stockwell,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Heard.

Clerks belonging to Stockwell, Servants, Sailors, Negroes, &c.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

STOCKWELL,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
BELCOUR,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Lewis.
Captain DUDLEY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Hull.
CHARLES DUDLEY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Farren.
Major O'FLAHERTY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Johnstone.
STUKELY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Gardner.
FULMER,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Thompson.
VARLAND,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Quick.
Servant to Stockwell,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Ledger.

Women.

Lady RUSPORT,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Webb.
CHARLOTTE RUSPORT,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Abington.
LOUISA, daughter to Dudley,	-	-	-	-	-	Miss Tweedale.
Mrs. FULMER,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Davenett.
LUCY,	-	-	-	-	-	Miss Stuart.
Housekeeper belonging to Stockwell,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. White.

Clerks belonging to Stockwell, Servants, Sailors, Negroes, &c.

SCENE, London.



THE WEST INDIAN.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Merchant's Compting-House. In an inner Room, set off by Glass Doors, are discovered several Clerks, employed at their Desks. A Writing Table in the front Room. STOCKWELL is discovered, reading a Letter; STUKELY comes gently out of the back Room, and observes him some Time before he speaks.

Stukely.

He seems disordered: something in that letter, and I'm afraid of an unpleasant sort. He has many ventures of great account at sea; a ship richly freighted for Barcelona; another for Lisbon; and others expected from Cadiz of still greater value. Besides these, I know he has many deep concerns in foreign bottoms, and underwritings to a vast amount. I'll accost him. Sir! Mr. Stockwell!

Stock. Stukely!—Well have you shipp'd the cloths?

Stuke. I have, sir; here's the bill of lading, and copy of the invoice: the assortments are all compared: Mr. Traffick will give you the policy upon 'Change. II

Stock. 'Tis very well; lay these papers by, and no more of business for a while. Shut the door, Stukely: I have had long proof of your friendship and fidelity to me; a mat-

ter of most infinite concern lies on my mind, and 'twill be a sensible relief to unbosom myself to you ; I have just now been informed of the arrival of the young West Indian I have so long been expecting ; you know whom I mean.

Stuke. Yes, sir ; Mr. Belcour, the young gentleman who inherited old Belcour's great estates in Jamaica. 20

Stock. Hush, not so loud ; come a little nearer this way. This Belcour is now in London ; part of his baggage is already arrived ; and I expect him every minute. Is it to be wondered at, if his coming throws me into some agitation, when I tell you, Stukely, he is my son ?

Stuke. Your son !

Stock. Yes, sir, my only son : early in life I accompanied his grandfather to Jamaica as his clerk ; he had an only daughter, somewhat older than myself, the mother of this gentleman. It was my chance (call it good or ill) to engage her affections ; and, as the inferiority of my condition made it hopeless to expect her father's consent, her fondness provided an expedient, and we were privately married : the issue of that concealed engagement is, as I have told you, this Belcour. 35

Stuke. That event, surely, discovered your connection ?

Stock. You shall hear. Not many days after our marriage, old Belcour set out for England ; and, during his abode here, my wife was, with great secrecy, delivered of this son.—Fruitful in expedients to disguise her situation, without parting from her infant, she contrived to have it laid and received at her door as a foundling. After some time her father returned, having left me here ; in one of those favourable moments, that decide the fortunes of prosperous men, this child was introduced : from that instant, he treated him as his own, gave him his name, and brought him up in his family. 47

Stuke. And did you never reveal this secret, either to old Belcour, or your son?

Stock. Never.

Stuke. Therein you surprise me; a merchant of your eminence, and a member of the British parliament, might surely aspire, without offence, to the daughter of a planter. — In this case too, natural affection would prompt to a discovery.

Stock. Your remark is obvious; nor could I have persisted in this painful silence, but in obedience to the dying injunctions of a beloved wife. The letter you found me reading conveyed those injunctions to me; it was dictated in her last illness, and almost in the article of death (you'll spare me the recital of it); she there conjures me, in terms as solemn as they are affecting, never to reveal the secret of our marriage, or withdraw my son, while her father survived. 63

Stuke. But on what motives did your unhappy lady found these injunctions?

Stock. Principally, I believe, from apprehension on my account, lest old Belcour, on whom at her decease I wholly depended, should withdraw his protection; in part from consideration of his repose, as well knowing the discovery would deeply affect his spirit, which was haughty, vehement, and unforgiving: and, lastly, in regard to the interest of her infant, whom he had warmly adopted; and for whom, in case of a discovery, every thing was to be dreaded from his resentment. And, indeed, though the alteration in my condition might have justified me in discovering myself, yet I always thought my son safer in trusting to the caprice than to the justice of his grand-father. My judgment has not suffer'd by the event; old Belcour is dead, and has bequeathed his whole estate to him we are speaking of. 79

Stuke. Now, then, you are no longer bound to secrecy.

Stock. True ; but before I publicly reveal myself, I could wish to make some experiment of my son's disposition : this can only be done by letting his spirit take its course without restraint ; by these means, I think, I shall discover much more of his real character under the title of his merchant, than I should under that of his father.

SCENE II.

A Sailor enters, ushering in several black Servants, carrying Portmanteaus, Trunks, &c.

Sail. Save your honour—is your name Stockwell, pray ?

Stock. It is.

Sail. Part of my master Belcour's baggage, an't please you : there's another cargo not far a-stern of us, and the cockswain has got charge of the dumb creatures. 91

Stock. Pr'ythee, friend, what dumb creatures do you speak of ; has Mr. Belcour brought over a collection of wild beasts ?

Sail. No, lord love him ; no, not he : let me see ; there's two green monkies, a pair of grey parrots, a Jamaica sow and pigs, and a Mangrove dog ; that's all.

Stock. Is that all ?

Sail. Yes, your honour ; yes, that's all : bless his heart, a'might have brought over the whole island if he would ; a'didn't leave a dry eye in it. 101

Stock. Indeed ! Stukely, shew 'em where to bestow their baggage. Follow that gentleman.

Sail. Come, bear a hand, my lads, bear a hand.

[Exit with Stukely and servants.]

Stock. If the principal tallies with his purveyors, he must be a singular spectacle in this place : he has a friend, how-

ever, in this sea-faring fellow; 'tis no bad prognostic of a man's heart, when his shipmates give him a good word.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.

Changes to a Drawing-Room. A Servant discovered setting the Chairs by, &c. A Woman Servant enters to him.

Housek. Why, what a fuss does our good master put himself in about this West Indian: see what a bill of fare I've been forced to draw out: seven and nine, I'll assure you, and only a family dinner, as he calls it: why, if my Lord Mayor was expected, there couldn't be a greater to-do about him.

Serv. I wish to my heart you had but seen the loads of trunks, boxes, and portmanteaus he has sent hither. An ambassador's baggage, with all the smuggled goods of his family, does not exceed it. 118

Housek. A fine pickle he'll put the house into: had he been master's own son, and a Christian Englishman, there couldn't be more rout than there is about this Creolian, as they call 'em.

Serv. No matter for that; he's very rich, and that's sufficient. They say he has rum and sugar enough belonging to him, to make all the water in the Thames into punch.— But I see my master's coming. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

STOCKWELL enters, followed by a Servant.

Stock. Where is Mr. Belcour? Who brought this note from him? 128

Serv. A waiter from the London Tavern, sir; he says the young gentleman is just drest, and will be with you directly.

Stock. Shew him in when he arrives.

Serv. I shall, sir. I'll have a peep at him first, however: I've a great mind to see this outlandish spark. The sailor fellow says he'll make rare doings amongst us. [*Aside.*]

Stock. You need not wait; leave me. [*Exit Serv.*] Let me see—
[*Reads.*]

‘ SIR,

‘ I write to you under the hands of the hair-dresser; as soon as I have made myself decent, and slipped on some fresh clothes, I will have the honour of paying you my devoirs.

‘ Yours, BELCOUR.’

He writes at his ease; for he's unconscious to whom his letter is addressed; but what a palpitation does it throw my heart into; a father's heart! 'Tis an affecting interview: when my eyes meet a son whom they yet never saw, where shall I find constancy to support it. Should he resemble his mother, I am overthrown. All the letters I have had from him (for I industriously drew him into a correspondence with me), bespeak him of quick and ready understanding. All the reports I ever received give me favourable impressions of his character; wild, perhaps, as the manner of his country is, but, I trust, not frantic or unprincipled. 151

SCENE V.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, the foreign gentleman is come.

Another Servant.

Serv. Mr. Belcour.

BELCOUR enters.

Stock. Mr. Belcour, I'm rejoiced to see you; you're welcome to England.

Bel. I thank you heartily, good Mr. Stockwell:—you and I have long conversed at a distance; now we are met; and the pleasure this meeting gives me, amply compensates for the perils I have run through in accomplishing it. 159

Stock. What perils, Mr. Belcour? I could not have thought you would have made a bad passage at this time o'year.

Bel. Nor did we: courier like, we came posting to your shores, upon the pinions of the swiftest gales that ever blew; 'tis upon English ground all my difficulties have arisen; 'tis the passage from the river side I complain of.

Stock. Ay, indeed! What obstruction can you have met between this and the river side? 168

Bel. Innumerable! Your town's as full of defiles as the island of Corsica; and, I believe, they are as obstinately defended: so much hurry, bustle, and confusion on your quays; so many sugar-casks, porter-buts, and common-council-men in your streets, that, unless a man marched with artillery in his front, 'tis more than the labour of a Hercules can effect, to make any tolerable way through your town.

Stock. I am sorry you have been so incommoded.

Bel. Why, faith, 'twas all my own fault; accustomed to a land of slaves, and out of patience with the whole tribe of custom-house extortioners, boatmen, tide-waiters, and water-bailiffs, that beset me on all sides, worse than a swarm of musquetoos, I proceed a little too roughly to brush them away with my rattan; the sturdy rogues took this in dudgeon, and beginning to rebel, the mob chose different sides,

and a furious scuffle ensued: in the course of which my person and apparel suffered so much, that I was obliged to step into the first tavern to refit, before I could make my approaches in any decent trim. 188

Stock. All without is as I wish; dear Nature, add the rest, and I am happy.—[*Aside.*]—Well, Mr. Belcour, 'tis a rough sample you have had of my countrymen's spirit; but, I trust, you'll not think the worse of them for it.

Bel. Not at all, not at all; I like 'em the better; was I only a visitor, I might, perhaps, wish them a little more tractable; but, as a fellow subject, and a sharer in their freedom, I applaud their spirit, though I feel the effects of it in every bone of my skin. 197

Stock. That's well; I like that well. How gladly I could fall upon his neck, and own myself his father. [*Aside.*

Bel. Well, Mr. Stockwell, for the first time in my life, here am I in England; at the fountain-head of pleasure, in the land of beauty, of arts, and elegancies. My happy stars have given me a good estate, and the conspiring winds have blown me hither to spend it.

Stock. To use it, not to waste it, I should hope; to treat it, Mr. Belcour, not as a vassal, over whom you have a wanton and a despotic power; but as a subject, which you are bound to govern with a temperate and restrained authority.

Bel. True, sir; most truly said; mine's a commission, not a right: I am the offspring of distress, and every child of sorrow is my brother; while I have hands to hold, therefore, I will hold them open to mankind: but, sir, my passions are my masters; they take me where they will; and oftentimes they leave to reason and to virtue nothing but my wishes and my sighs.

Stock. Come, come, the man who can accuse corrects himself.

Bel. Ah ! that's an office I am weary of : I wish a friend would take it up ; I would to Heaven you had leisure for the employ ; but did you drive a trade to the four corners of the world, you would not find the task so toilsome as to keep me free from faults. 222

Stock. Well, I am not discouraged : this candour tells me I should not have the fault of self-conceit to combat ; that at least, is not among the number.

Bel. No ; if I knew that man on earth who thought more humbly of me than I do of myself, I would take up his opinion, and forego my own.

Stock. And, was I to choose a pupil, it should be one of your complexion : so, if you'll come along with me, we'll agree upon your admission, and enter on a course of lectures directly. 232

Bel. With all my heart.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

Changes to a Room in Lady RUSPORT's House. Enter Lady RUSPORT and CHARLOTTE.

L. Rus. Miss Rusport, I desire to hear no more of Captain Dudley and his destitute family ; not a shilling of mine shall ever cross the hands of any of them : because my sister chose to marry a beggar, am I bound to support him and his posterity ?

Char. I think you are.

L. Rus. You think I am ; and pray where do you find the law that tells you so ? 241

Char. I am not proficient enough to quote chapter and verse ; but I take charity to be a main clause in the great statute of christianity.

L. Rus. I say charity, indeed ! And pray, miss, are you

sure that it is charity, pure charity, which moves you to plead for Captain Dudley? Amongst all your pity, do you find no spice of a certain anti-spiritual passion, called love? Don't mistake yourself; you are no saint, child, believe me; and, I am apt to think, the distresses of old Dudley, and of his daughter into the bargain, would never break your heart, if there was not a certain young fellow of two and twenty in the case; who, by the happy recommendation of a good person, and the brilliant appointments of an ensigncy, will, if I am not mistaken, cozen you out of a fortune of twice twenty thousand pounds, as soon as ever you are of age to bestow it upon him.

Char. A nephew of your ladyship's can never want any other recommendation with me; and, if my partiality for Charles Dudley is acquitted by the rest of the world, I hope Lady Rusport will not condemn me for it. 261

L. Rus. I condemn you! I thank Heaven, Miss Rusport, I am no ways responsible for your conduct; nor is it any concern of mine how you dispose of yourself: you are not my daughter; and, when I married your father, poor Sir Stephen Rusport, I found you a forward spoiled miss of fourteen, far above being instructed by me.

Char. Perhaps your ladyship calls this instruction.

L. Rus. You're strangely pert; but 'tis no wonder: your mother, I'm told, was a fine lady; and according to the modern stile of education you was brought up. It was not so in my young days; there was then some decorum in the world, some subordination, as the great Locke expresses it. Oh! 'twas an edifying sight, to see the regular deportment observed in our family: no giggling, no gossiping was going on there; my good father, Sir Oliver Roundhead, never was seen to laugh himself, nor ever allowed it in any of his children.

Char. Ay; those were happy times indeed.

L. Rus. But, in this forward age, we have coquettes in the egg-shell, and philosophers in the cradle ; girls of fifteen that lead the fashion in new caps and new opinions, that have their sentiments and their sensations ; and the idle fops encourage 'em in it : O' my conscience, I wonder what it is the men can see in such babies. 285

Char. True, madam ; but all men do not overlook the maturer beauties of your ladyship's age, witness your admirer Major Dennis O'Flaherty ; there's an example of some discernment ; I declare to you, when your ladyship is by, the major takes no more notice of me than if I was part of the furniture of your chamber.

L. Rus. The major, child, has travelled through various kingdoms and climates, and has more enlarged notions of female merit than falls to the lot of an English home-bred lover ; in most other countries, no woman on your side forty would ever be named in a polite circle. 296

Char. Right, madam ; I've been told that in Vienna they have coquettes upon crutches, and Venuses in their grand climacteric ; a lover there celebrates the wrinkles, not the dimples, in his mistress's face. The major, I think, has served in the imperial army.

L. Rus. Are you piqu'd, my young madam ? Had my sister, Louisa, yielded to the addresses of one of Major O'Flaherty's person and appearance, she would have had some excuse : but to run away, as she did, at the age of sixteen too, with a man of old Dudley's sort—— 306

Char. Was, in my opinion, the most venial trespass that ever girl of sixteen committed of a noble family, an engaging person, strict honour, and sound understanding, what accomplishment was there wanting in Captain Dudley, but that which the prodigality of his ancestors had deprived him of ?

L. Rus. They left him as much as he deserves ; hasn't the old man captain's half pay ? And is not the son an ensign ?

Char. An ensign ! Alas, poor Charles ! Would to Heaven he knew what my heart feels and suffers for his sake. 316

Enter Servant.

Serv. Ensign Dudley to wait upon your ladyship.

L. Rus. Who ! Dudley ! What can have brought him to town ?

Char. Dear madam, 'tis Charles Dudley, 'tis your nephew.

L. Rus. Nephew ! I renounce him as my nephew ; Sir Oliver renounced him as his grandson : wasn't he son of the eldest daughter, and only male descendant of Sir Oliver ; and didn't he cut him off with a shilling ? Didn't the poor dear good man leave his whole fortune to me, except a small annuity to my maiden sister, who spoiled her constitution with nursing him ? And, depend upon it, not a penny of that fortune shall ever be disposed of otherwise than according to the will of the donor. 329

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY.

So, young man, whence come you ? What brings you to town ?

Charles. If there is any offence in my coming to town, your ladyship is in some degree responsible for it, for part of my errand was to pay my duty here.

L. Rus. I hope you have some better excuse than all this.

Charles. 'Tis true, madam, I have other motives ; but, if I consider my trouble repaid by the pleasure I now enjoy, I should hope my aunt would not think my company the less welcome for the value I set upon hers.

L. Rus. Coxcomb ! And where is your father, child ; and your sister ? Are they in town too ? 341

Charles. They are.

L. Rus. Ridiculous ! I don't know what people do in London, who have no money to spend in it.

Char. Dear madam, speak more kindly to your nephew ; how can you oppress a youth of his sensibility.

L. Rus. Miss Rusport, I insist upon your retiring to your apartment ; when I want your advice I'll send to you. [*Exit Charlotte.*] So, you have put on a red coat too, as well as your father ; 'tis plain what value you set upon the good advice Sir Oliver used to give you ; how often has he caution'd you against the army ? 352

Charles. Had it pleased my grandfather to enable me to have obeyed his caution, I would have done it ; but you well know how destitute I am ; and 'tis not to be wonder'd at if I prefer the service of my king to that of any other master.

L. Rus. Well, well, take your own course ; 'tis no concern of mine : you never consulted me.

Charles. I frequently wrote to your ladyship, but could obtain no answer ; and, since my grandfather's death, this is the first opportunity I have had of waiting upon you. 361

L. Rus. I must desire you not to mention the death of that dear good man in my hearing, my spirits cannot support it.

Charles. I shall obey you : permit me to say, that, as that event has richly supplied you with the materials of bounty, the distresses of my family can furnish you with objects of it.

L. Rus. The distresses of your family, child, are quite out of the question at present ; had Sir Oliver been pleased to consider them, I should have been well content ; but he has absolutely taken no notice of you in his will, and that to me must and shall be a law. Tell your father and your sister I totally disapprove of their coming up to town. 372

Charles. Must I tell my father that before your ladyship knows the motive that brought him hither ? Allur'd by the

offer of exchanging for a commission on full pay, the veteran, after thirty years service, prepares to encounter the fatal heats of Senegambia ; but wants a small supply to equip him for the expedition.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Major O'Flaherty to wait on your ladyship. 379

Enter Major O'FLAHERTY.

O'Fla. Spare your speeches, young man ; don't you think her ladyship can take my word for that ? I hope, madam, 'tis evidence enough of my being present, when I've the honour of telling you so myself.

L. Rus. Major O'Flaherty, I am rejoiced to see you. Nephew Dudley, you perceive I'm engaged. 385

Charles. I shall not intrude upon your ladyship's more agreeable engagements. I presume I have my answer.

L. Rus. Your answer, child ! What answer can you possibly expect ; or how can your romantic father suppose that I am to abet him in all his idle and extravagant undertakings ? Come, major, let me shew you the way into my dressing-room ; and let us leave this young adventurer to his meditation. [Exit.

O'Fla. I follow you, my lady. Young gentleman, your obedient ! Upon my conscience, as fine a young fellow as I would wish to clap my eyes on : he might have answer'd my salute, however—well, let it pass ; fortune, perhaps, frowns upon the poor lad ; she's a damn'd slippery lady, and very apt to jilt us poor fellows that wear cockades in our hats. Fare-thee-well, honey, whoever thou art. [Exit.

Charles. So much for the virtues of a puritan ; out upon it, her heart is flint ; yet that woman, that aunt of mine, without one worthy particle in her composition, would, I

dare be sworn, as soon set her foot in a pest-house as in a play-house. [Going.

Miss RUSPORT enters to him.

Char. Stop, stay a little, Charles, whither are you going in such haste?

Charles. Madam; Miss Rusport; what are your commands? 409

Char. Why so reserved? We had used to answer to no other names than those of Charles and Charlotte.

Charles. What ails you? You've been weeping.

Char. No, no; or if I have——your eyes are full too: but I have a thousand things to say to you: before you go, tell me, I conjure you, where you are to be found; here, give me your direction; write it upon the back of this visiting ticket——Have you a pencil?

Charles. I have: but why should you desire to find us out? 'tis a poor, little, inconvenient place; my sister has no apartment fit to receive you in. 420

Servant enters.

Serv. Madam, my lady desires your company directly.

Char. I am coming——well, have you wrote it? Give it me. O Charles, either you do not, or you will not understand me. [Exeunt severally.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Room in FULMER's House. Enter FULMER and Mrs. FULMER.

Mrs. Fulmer.

WHY, how you sit, musing and moping, sighing and desponding! I'm ashamed of you, Mr. Fulmer: is this the

country you described to me, a second Eldorado, rivers of gold and rocks of diamonds? You found me in a pretty snug retir'd way of life at Bologne, out of the noise and bustle of the world, and wholly at my ease; you, indeed, was upon the wing, with a fiery persecution at your back: but, like a true son of Loyola, you had then a thousand ingenious devices to repair your fortune: and this, your native country, was to be the scene of your performances: fool that I was, to be inveigled into it by you: but, thank Heaven, our partnership is revocable; I am not your wedded wife, praised be my stars! for what have we got, whom have we gull'd but ourselves; which of all your trains has taken fire; even this poor expedient of your bookseller's shop seems abandoned; for if a chance customer drops in, who is there, pray, to help him to what he wants. 17

Ful. Patty, you know it is not upon slight grounds that I despair; there had us'd to be a livelihood to be pick'd up in this country, both for the honest and dishonest: I have tried each walk, and am likely to starve at last; there is not a point to which the wit and faculty of man can turn, that I have not set mine to; but in vain, I am beat through every quarter of the compass.

Mrs. Ful. Ah! common efforts all: strike me a master-stroke, Mr. Fulmer, if you wish to make any figure in this country. 27

Ful. But where, how, and what? I have bluster'd for prerogative; I have bellowed for freedom; I have offer'd to serve my country; I have engaged to betray it; a master-stroke, truly: why, I have talked treason, writ treason, and if a man can't live by that, he can live by nothing. Here I set up as a bookseller, why men left off reading; and if I was to turn butcher, I believe o'my conscience they'd leave off eating.

[*Captain Dudley crosses the stage.*]

Mrs. Ful. Why there now's your lodger, old Captain Dudley, as he calls himself: there's no flint without fire; something might be struck out of him, if you'd the wit to find the way. 39

Ful. Hang him, an old dry-skin'd curmudgeon; you may as well think to get truth out of a courtier, or candour out of a critic. I can make nothing of him; besides, he's poor, and therefore not for our purpose.

Mrs. Ful. The more fool he! Would any man be poor that had such a prodigy in his possession?

Ful. His daughter, you mean; she is indeed uncommonly beautiful.

Mrs. Ful. Beautiful! Why she need only be seen, to have the first men in the kingdom at her feet. Egad, I wish I had the leasing of her beauty; what would some of our young nabobs give?—— 51

Ful. Hush! here comes the captain; good girl, leave us to ourselves, and let me try what I can make of him.

Mrs. Ful. Captain, truly! i'faith, I'd have a regiment, had I such a daughter, before I was three months older.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Captain DUDLEY enters to him.

Ful. Captain Dudley, good morning to you.

Dud. Mr. Fulmer, I have borrowed a book from your shop; 'tis the sixth volume of my deceased friend Tristram; he is a flattering writer to us poor soldiers; and the divine story of Le Fevre, which makes part of this book, in my opinion of it, does honour not to its author only, but to human nature. 62

Ful. He's an author I keep in the way of trade, but one I

never relish'd ; he is much too loose and profligate for my taste.

Dud. That's being too severe : I hold him to be a moralist in the noblest tense ; he plays indeed with the fancy, and sometimes perhaps too wantonly ; but while he thus designedly masks his main attack, he comes at once upon the heart ; refines, amends it, softens it ; beats down each selfish barrier from about it, and opens every sluice of pity and benevolence. 72

Ful. We of the catholic persuasion are not much bound to him.—Well, sir, I shall not oppose your opinion ; a favourite author is like a favourite mistress ; and there you know, captain, no man likes to have his taste arraigned.

Dud. Upon my word, sir, I don't know what a man likes in that case 'tis an experiment I never made.

Ful. Sir !—Are you serious ?

Dud. 'Tis of little consequence whether you think so.

Ful. What a formal old prig it is ! [*Aside.*] I apprehend you, sir ; you speak with caution ; you are married ? 82

Dud. I have been.

Ful. And this young lady which accompanies you——

Dud. Passes for my daughter.

Ful. Passes for his daughter ! humph—[*Aside.*] She is exceedingly beautiful, finely accomplished, of a most enchanting shape and air.

Dud. You are much too partial ; she has the greatest defect a woman can have. 92

Ful. How so, pray ?

Dud. She has no fortune.

Ful. Rather say that you have none ; and that's a sore defect in one of your years, Captain Dudley : you've served, no doubt ?

Dud. Familiar coxcomb ? But I'll humour him. [*Aside.*

Ful. A close old fox! But I'll unkennel him. [*Aside.*

Dud. Above thirty years I've been in the service, Mr. Fulmer. 101

Ful. I guess'd as much; I laid it at no less: why 'tis a wearisome time; 'tis an apprenticeship to a profession, fit only for a patriarch. But preferment must be closely followed: you never could have been so far behind-hand in the chace, unless you had palpably mistaken your way. You'll pardon me, but I begin to perceive you have lived in the world, not with it.

Dud. It may be so; and you, perhaps, can give me better counsel. I'm now soliciting a favour; an exchange to a company on full pay; nothing more: and yet I meet a thousand bars to that; though, without boasting, I should think the certificate of services, which I sent in, might have purchased that indulgence to me. 114

Ful. Who thinks or cares about 'em? Certificate of services, indeed? Send in a certificate of your fair daughter; carry her in your hand with you.

Dud. What! Who? My daughter! Carry my daughter! Well, and what then?

Ful. Why, then your fortune's made, that's all.

Dud. I understand you: and this you call knowledge of the world? Despicable knowledge! But, sirrah, I will have you know—— [*Threatening him.*

Ful. Help! Who's within? Would you strike me, sir? Would you lift up your hand against a man in his own house? 126

Dud. In a church, if he dare insult the poverty of a man of honour.

Ful. Have a care what you do; remember there is such a thing in law as an assault and battery; ay, and such trifling forms as warrants and indictments.

Dud. Go, sir; you are too mean for my resentment: 'tis that, and not the law, protects you.—Hence! 133

Ful. An old, absurd, incorrigible blockhead! I'll be revenged of him. [*Aside.*] [Exit. 134]

SCENE III.

Young DUDLEY enters to him.

Charles. What is the matter, sir? Sure I heard an outcry as I enter'd the house?

Dud. Not unlikely; our landlord and his wife are for ever wrangling.—Did you find your aunt Dudley at home?

Charles. I did. 140

Dud. And what was your reception?

Charles. Cold as our poverty and her pride could make it.

Dud. You told her the pressing occasion I had for a small supply to equip me for this exchange; has she granted me the relief I asked?

Charles. Alas, sir, she has peremptorily refused it.

Dud. That's hard: that's hard, indeed. My petition was for a small sum; she has refused it, you say: well, be it so; I must not complain. Did you see the broker about the insurance on my life? 150

Charles. There again I am the messenger of ill news; I can raise no money, so fatal is the climate: alas, that ever my father should be sent to perish in such a place!

SCENE IV.

Miss DUDLEY enters hastily.

Dud. Louisa, what's the matter? you seem frightened.

Lou. I am, indeed: coming from Miss Rusport's, I met a

young gentleman in the streets, who has beset me in the strangest manner.

Charles. Insufferable! was he rude to you? 158

Lou. I cannot say he was absolutely rude to me, but he was very importunate to speak to me, and once or twice attempted to lift up my hat: he followed me to the corner of the street, and there I gave him the slip.

Dud. You must walk no more in the streets, child, without me or your brother.

Lou. O, Charles, Miss Russport desires to see you directly: Lady Rusport is gone out, and she has something particular to say to you.

Charles. Have you any commands for me, sir? 163

Dud. None, my dear; by all means wait upon Miss Russport. Come, Louisa, I shall desire you to go up to your chamber, and compose yourself, [Exeunt.]

SCENE V.

Enter BELCOUR, after peeping in at the Door.

Bel. Not a soul, as I'm alive. Why, what an odd sort of a house is this! Confound the little jilt, she has fairly given me the slip. A plague upon this London, I shall have no luck in it: such a crowd, and such a hurry, and such a number of shops, and one so like the other, that whether the wench turned into this house or the next, or whether she went up stairs or down stairs (for there's a world above and a world below, it seems), I declare I know no more than if I was in the Blue Mountains. In the name of all the devils at once, why did she run away? If every handsome girl I meet in this town is to lead me such a wild-goose chase, I had better have stayed in the torrid zone. I shall be wasted

to the size of a sugar-cane. What shall I do? give the chace up? Hang it, that's cowardly. Shall I, a true-born son of Phœbus, suffer this little nimble-footed Daphne to escape me?—"Forbid it, honour, and forbid it, love."—Hush, hush—here she comes.—Oh, the devil!—What tawdry thing have we got here?—

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Mrs. FULMER enters to him.

Mrs. Ful. Your humble servant, sir.

Bel. Your humble servant, madam.

Mrs. Ful. A fine summer's day, sir.

Bel. Yes, ma'am, and so cool, that if the calendar didn't call it July, I should swear it was January.

Mrs. Ful. Sir!

Bel. Madam!

Mrs. Ful. Do you wish to speak to Mr. Fulmer, sir?

Bel. Mr. Fulmer, madam? I hav'n't the honour of knowing such a person.

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Mrs. Ful. No, I'll be sworn, have you not; thou art much too pretty a fellow, and too much of a gentleman, to be an author thyself, or to have any thing to say to those that are so. 'Tis the captain, I suppose, you are waiting for.

Bel. I rather suspect it is the captain's wife.

Mrs. Ful. The captain has no wife, sir.

Bel. No wife! I'm heartily sorry for it; for then she's his mistress; and that I take to be the more desperate case of the two: pray, madam, wasn't there a lady just now turn'd into your house? 'Twas with her I wish'd to speak.

Mrs. Ful. What sort of a lady, pray?

210

Bel. One of the loveliest sort my eyes ever beheld; young, tall, fresh, fair; in short, a goddess.

Mrs. Ful. Nay, but dear, dear sir, now I'm sure you

flatter: for 'twas me you followed into the shop-door this minute.

Bel. You! No, no, take my word for it, it was not you, madam.

Mrs. Ful. But what is it you laugh at?

Bel. Upon my soul, I ask your pardon; but it was not you, believe me: be assur'd it wasn't. 220

Mrs. Ful. Well, sir, I shall not contend for the honour of being noticed by you; I hope you think you wou'dn't have been the first man that noticed me in the streets; however, this I'm positive of that no living woman but myself has enter'd these doors this morning.

Bel. Why then I'm mistaken in the house, that's all; for 'tis not humanly possible I can be so far out in the lady.

[Going.

Mrs. Ful. Coxcomb! But hold—a thought occurs; as sure as can be he has seen Miss Dudley. A word with you, young gentleman; come back. 230

Bel. Well, what's your pleasure?

Mrs. Ful. You seem greatly captivated with this young lady; are you apt to fall in love thus at first sight?

Bel. Oh, yes: 'tis the only way I can ever fall in love; any man may tumble into a pit by surprise, none but a fool would walk into one by choice.

Mrs. Ful. You are a hasty lover it seems; have you spirit to be a generous one? They that will please the eye mustn't spare the purse. 239

Bel. Try me; put me to the proof: bring me to an interview with the dear girl that has thus captivated me, and see whether I have spirit to be grateful.

Mrs. Ful. But how, pray, am I to know the girl you have set your heart on?

Bel. By an undescribable grace, that accompanies every

look and action that falls from her ; there can be but one such woman in the world, and nobody can mistake that one.

Mrs. Ful. Well, if I should stumble upon this angel in my walks where am I to find you ? What's your name ?

Bel. Upon my soul, I can't tell you my name. 250

Mrs. Ful. Not tell me ! Why so ?

Bel. Because I don't know what it is myself ; as yet I have no name.

Mrs. Ful. No name !

Bel. None ; a friend, indeed, lent me his ; but he forbid me to use it on any unworthy occasion.

Mrs. Ful. But where is your place of abode ?

Bel. I have none ; I never slept a night in England in my life.

Mrs. Ful. Hey-day ! 260

SCENE VI.

Enter FULMER.

Ful. A fine case, truly, in a free country ; a pretty pass things are come to, if a man is to be assaulted in his own house.

Mrs. Ful. Who has assaulted you, my dear ?

Ful. Who ! Why this Captain Drawcansir, this old Dudley, my lodger : but I'll unlodge him ; I'll unharbour him, I warrant.

Mrs. Ful. Hush ! hush ! hold your tongue, man ; pocket the affront, and be quiet ; I've a scheme on foot will pay you a hundred beatings. Why you surprise me, Mr. Fulmer ; Captain Dudley assault you ! Impossible. 271

Ful. Nay, I can't call it an absolute assault ; but he threatened me.

Mrs. Ful. Oh, was that all? I thought how it would turn out—A likely thing, truly, for a person of his obliging compassionate turn: no, no, poor Captain Dudley, he has sorrows and distresses enough of his own to employ his spirits, without setting them against other people. Make it up as fast as you can: watch this gentleman out; follow him wherever he goes; and bring me word who and what he is; be sure you don't lose sight of him; I've other business in hand. [Exit.

Bel. Pray, sir, what sorrows and distresses have befallen this old gentlemen you speak of? 284

Ful. Poverty, disappointment, and all the distresses attendant thereupon: sorrow enough of all conscience! I soon found how it was with him by his way of living, low enough of all reason; but what I overheard this morning put it out of all doubt.

Bel. What did you overhear this morning?

Ful. Why, it seems he wants to join his regiment, and has been beating the town over to raise a little money for that purpose upon his pay; but the climate, I find, where he is going, is so unhealthy, that nobody can be found to lend him any.

Bel. Why then your town is a damn'd good-for-nothing town: and I wish I had never come into it. 296

Ful. That's what I say, sir; the hard-heartedness of some folks is unaccountable. There's an old Lady Rusport, a near relation of this gentleman's; she lives hard by here, opposite to Stockwell's, the great merchant; he sent to her a begging, but to no purpose; though she is as rich as a Jew, she would not furnish him with a farthing.

Bel. Is the captain at home?

Ful. He is up stairs, sir.

Bel. Will you take the trouble to desire him to step hither? I want to speak to him. 306

Ful. I'll send him to you directly. I don't know what to make of this young man; but, if I live, I will find him out, or know the reason why. [Exit.]

Bel. I've lost the girl, it seems; that's clear: she was the first object of my pursuit; but the case of this poor officer touches me: and, after all, there may be as much true delight in rescuing a fellow-creature from distress, as there would be in plunging one into it—But let me see—It's a point that must be managed with some delicacy—Apropos! there's pen and ink—I've struck upon a method that will do.—[Writes.]—Ay, ay, this is the very thing: 'twas devilish lucky that I happened to have these bills about me. There, there, fare you well; I'm glad to be rid of you, you stood a chance of being worse applied, I can tell you. 320
[Encloses and seals the paper.]

SCENE VII.

FULMER brings in DUDLEY.

Ful. That's the gentleman, sir.—I shall make bold, however, to lend an ear. [Exit.]

Dud. Have you any commands for me, sir?

Bel. Your name is Dudley, sir?

Dud. It is.

Bel. You command a company, I think, Captain Dudley?

Dud. I did: I am now upon half-pay.

Bel. You've served some time?

Dud. A pretty many years; long enough to see some people of more merit and better interest than myself made general officers. 331

Bel. Their merit I may have some doubt of; their interest I can readily give credit to: there is little promotion to be

looked for in your profession, I believe, without friends, captain?

335

Dud. I believe so too: have you any other business with me, may I ask?

Bel. Your patience for a moment. I was informed you was about to join your regiment in distant quarters abroad.

Dud. I have been soliciting an exchange to a company on full pay, quarter'd at James's-Fort, in Senegambia; but I'm afraid I must drop the undertaking.

Bel. Why so, pray?

Dud. Why so, sir?—'Tis a home question for a perfect stranger to put: there is something very particular in all this.

Bel. If it is not impertinent, sir, allow me to ask you what reason you have for despairing of success.

Dud. Why really, sir, mine is an obvious reason for a soldier to have—Want of money; simply that.

350

Bel. May I beg to know the sum you have occasion for?

Dud. Truly, sir, I cannot exactly tell you on a sudden; nor is it, I suppose of any great consequence to you to be informed; but I should guess, in the gross, that two hundred pounds would serve.

Bel. And do you find a difficulty in raising that sum upon your pay? 'Tis done every day.

Dud. The nature of the climate makes it difficult: I can get no one to insure my life.

359

Bel. Oh! that's a circumstance may make for you as well as against: in short, Captain Dudley, it so happens, that I can command the sum of two hundred pounds; seek, therefore, no farther, I'll accommodate you with it upon easy terms.

Dud. Sir! do I understand you rightly?—I beg your pardon; but am I to believe that you are in earnest?

Bel. What is your surprise? Is it an uncommon thing for a gentleman to speak truth? Or is it incredible that one fellow creature should assist another? 369

Dud. I ask your pardon—May I beg to know to whom—
Do you propose this in the way of business?

Bel. Entirely: I have no other business on earth.

Dud. Indeed!—You are not a broker, I am persuaded.

Bel. I am not.

Dud. Nor an army agent, I think?

Bel. I hope you will not think the worse of me for being neither: in short, sir, if you will peruse this paper, it will explain to you who I am, and upon what terms I act; while you read it, I will step home and fetch the money, and we will conclude the bargain without loss of time. In the mean while, good day to you. [*Exit hastily.*]

Dud. Humph! there's something very odd in all this—
Let me see what we've got here—This paper is to tell me who he is, and what are his terms: in the name of wonder, why has he sealed it?—Hey-day! what's here? two bank-notes of a hundred each! I can't comprehend what this means. Hold; here's a writing; perhaps that will shew me. 'Accept this trifle, pursue your fortune, and prosper.'—
Am I in a dream? is this a reality? 389

SCENE VIII.

Enter Major O'FLAHERTY.

O'Fla. Save you, my dear! Is it you now that are Captain Dudley, I would ask?—Whuh! what's the hurry the man's in? If 'tis the lad that ran out of the shop you would overtake, you might as well stay where you are; by my soul he's as nimble as a Croat, you are a full hour's march

in his rear—Ay, 'faith, you may as well turn back, and give over the pursuit. Well, Captain Dudley, if that's your name, there's a letter for you. Read, man; read it; and I'll have a word with you after you have done.

Dud. More miracles on foot! So, so, from Lady Rusport.

O'Fla. You're right; it's from her ladyship. 400

Dud. Well, sir, I have cast my eye over it; 'tis short and peremptory; are you acquainted with the contents?

O'Fla. Not at all, my dear; not at all.

Dud. Have you any message from Lady Rusport?

O'Fla. Not a syllable, honey; only, when you've digested the letter, I've a little bit of a message to deliver you from myself.

Dud. And may I beg to know who yourself is?

O'Fla. Dennis O'Flaherty, at your service; a poor major of grenadiers; nothing better. 410

Dud. So much for your name and title, sir; now be so good to favour me with your message.

O'Fla. Why then, captain, I must tell you I have promised Lady Rusport you shall do whatever it is she bids you do in that letter there.

Dud. Ay, indeed: have you undertaken so much, major, without knowing either what she commands, or what I can perform?

O'Fla. That's your concern, my dear, not mine; I must keep my word, you know. 420

Dud. Or else, I suppose, you and I must measure swords.

O'Fla. Upon my soul, you've hit it.

Dud. That would hardly answer to either of us: you and I have, probably, had enough of fighting in our time before now.

O'Fla. Faith and troth, Master Dudley, you may say that: 'tis thirty years, come the time, that I have followed

the trade, and in a pretty many countries.—Let me see—in the war before last I served in the Irish brigade, d'ye see; there, after bringing off the French monarch, I left his service, with a British bullet in my body, and this ribband in my button-hole. Last war I followed the fortunes of the German eagle, in the corps of grenadiers; there I had my bellyfull of fighting, and a plentiful scarcity of every thing else. After six-and-twenty engagements, great and small, I went off, with this gash on my scull, and a kiss of the Empress Queen's sweet hand (Heaven bless it!) for my pains. Since the peace, my dear, I took a little turn with the Confederates there in Poland—but such another set of madcaps!—by the lord Harry, I never knew what it was they were scuffling about. 44¹

Dud. Well, major, I won't add another action to the list—you shall keep your promise with Lady Rusport; she requires me to leave London; I shall go in a few days, and you may take what credit you please from my compliance.

O'Fla. Give me your hand, my dear boy! This will make her my own: when that's the case, we shall be brothers, you know, and we'll share her fortune between us.

Dud. Not so, major: the man who marries Lady Rusport will have a fair title to her whole fortune without division. But, I hope, your expectations of prevailing are founded upon good reasons. 45²

O'Fla. Upon the best grounds in the world. First, I think she will comply, because she is a woman: secondly, I am persuaded she won't hold out long, because she's a widow: and thirdly, I make sure of her, because I've married five wives (*en militaire*, captain), and never failed yet; and, for what I know, they're all alive and merry at this very hour.

Dud. Well, sir, go on and prosper: if you can inspire Lady Rusport with half your charity, I shall think you de-

serve all her fortune: at present, I must beg your excuse: good morning to you. [Exit.

O' Fla. A good sensible man, and very much of a soldier; I did not care if I was better acquainted with him: but 'tis an awkward kind of country for that; the English, I observe, are close friends, but distant acquaintance. I suspect the old lady has not been over generous to poor Dudley; I shall give her a touch about that: upon my soul, I know but one excuse a person can have for giving nothing—and that is, like myself, having nothing to give. [Exit.

SCENE IX.

Changes to Lady RUSPORT's House. A Dressing-Room. Miss RUSPORT and LUCY.

Char. Well, Lucy, you've dislodged the old lady at last; but, methought, you was a tedious time about it. 472

Lucy. A tedious time, indeed; I think they who have least to spare, contrive to throw the most away; I thought I should never have got her out of the house.

Char. Why, she's as deliberate in canvassing every article of her dress, as an ambassador would be in settling the preliminaries of a treaty.

Lucy. There was a new hood and handkerchief, that had come express from Holborn-hill on the occasion, that took as much time in adjusting— 481

Char. As they did in making, and she was as vain of them as an old maid of a young lover.

Lucy. Or a young lover of himself. Then, madam, this being a visit of great ceremony to a person of distinction, at the West end of the town, the old state chariot was dragged forth on the occasion, with strict charges to dress out the box with the leopard-skin hammer-cloth.

Char. Yes, and to hang the false tails on the miserable stumps of the old crawling cattle. Well, well, pray Heaven the crazy affair don't break down again with her—at least till she gets to her journey's end!—But where's Charles Dudley? Run down, dear girl, and be ready to let him in I think he's as long in coming as she was in going. 494

Lucy. Why, indeed, madam, you seem the more alert of the two, I must say. [Exit.

Char. Now the deuce take the girl for putting that notion into my head! I'm sadly afraid Dudley does not like me; so much encouragement as I have given him to declare himself, I never could get a word from him on the subject. This may be very honourable, but upon my life it's very provoking. By the way, I wonder how I look to-day: Oh, shockingly! hideously pale! like a witch! This is the old lady's glass; and she has left some of her wrinkles on it.—How frightfully have I put on my cap! all awry! and my hair dress'd so unbecomingly! altogether, I'm a most complete fright.

SCENE X.

CHARLES DUDLEY comes in unobserved.

Charles. That I deny.

Char. Ah!

Charles. Quarrelling with your glass, cousin? Make it up; make it up, and be friends: it cannot compliment you more than by reflecting you as you are. 511

Char. Well, I vow, my dear Charles, that is delightfully said, and deserves my very best curtesy: your flattery, like a rich jewel, has a value not only from its superior lustre, but from its extraordinary scarceness: I verily think this is the only civil speech you ever directed to my person in your life.

Charles. And I ought to ask pardon of your good sense, for having done it now. 518

Char. Nay, now you relapse again: don't you know, if you keep well with a woman upon the great score of beauty, she'll never quarrel with you on the trifling article of good sense? But any thing serves to fill up a dull yawning hour with an insipid cousin; you have brighter moments, and warmer spirits, for the dear girl of your heart.

Charles. Oh, fie upon you, fie upon you!

Char. You blush, and the reason is apparent: you are a novice in hypocrisy; but no practice can make a visit of ceremony pass for a visit of choice: love is ever before its time; friendship is apt to lag a little after it: pray, Charles, did you make any extraordinary haste hither? 530

Charles. By your question, I see you acquit me of the impertinence of being in love.

Char. But why impertinence? Why the impertinence of being in love? You have one language for me, Charles, and another for the woman of your affection.

Charles. You are mistaken; the woman of my affection shall never hear any other language from me than what I use to you.

Char. I am afraid then you'll never make yourself understood by her. 540

Charles. It is not fit I should; there is no need of love to make me miserable; 'tis wretchedness enough to be a beggar.

Char. A beggar do you call yourself? O Charles, Charles, rich in every merit and accomplishment, whom may you not aspire to? And why think you so unworthily of our sex, as to conclude there is not one to be found with sense to discern your virtue, and generosity to reward it?

Charles. You distress me; I must beg to hear no more.

Char. Well, I can be silent.—Thus does he always serve me, whenever I am about to disclose myself to him. 551

Charles. Why do you not banish me and my misfortunes for ever from your thoughts ?

Char. Ay, wherefore do I not, since you never allowed me a place in yours ? But go, sir, I have no right to stay you ; go where your heart directs you ; go to the happy, the distinguished fair one.

Charles. Now, by all that's good you do me wrong : there is no such fair one for me to go to ; nor have I an acquaintance among the sex, yourself excepted, which answers to that description. 561

Char. Indeed !

Charles. In very truth : there then let us drop the subject. May you be happy, though I never can.

Char. O Charles ! give me your hand : if I have offended you, I ask your pardon : you have been long acquainted with my temper, and know how to bear with its infirmities.

Charles. Thus, my dear Charlotte, let us seal our reconciliation.—[*Kissing her hand.*]—Bear with thy infirmities ! By Heaven, I know not any one failing in thy whole composition, except that of too great a partiality for an undeserving man.

Char. And you are now taking the very course to augment that failing. A thought strikes me : I have a commission that you must absolutely execute for me ; I have immediate occasion for the sum of two hundred pounds : you know my fortune is shut up till I am of age : take this paltry box (it contains my ear-rings, and some other baubles I have no use for), carry it to our opposite neighbour, Mr. Stockwell (I don't know where else to apply), leave it as a deposit in his hands, and beg him to accommodate me with the sum.

Charles. Dear Charlotte, what are you about to do ? How can you possibly want two hundred pounds ? 582

Char. How can I possibly do without it, you mean? Doesn't every lady want two hundred pounds?—Perhaps I have lost it at play; perhaps I mean to win as much to it: perhaps I want it for two hundred different uses.

Charles. Pooh! pooh! all this is nothing; don't I know you never play? 588

Char. You mistake; I have a spirit to set not only this trifle, but my whole fortune upon a stake;—therefore make no wry faces, but do as I bid you; you will find Mr. Stockwell a very honourable gentleman.

LUCY enters in haste.

Lucy. Dear madam, as I live, here comes the old lady in a hackney-coach.

Char. The old chariot has given her a second tumble; away with you; you know your way out without meeting her: take the box, and do as I desire you.

Charles. I must not dispute your orders. Farewell.

[*Exeunt Charles and Charlotte.*]

SCENE XI.

Enter Lady RUSPORT, leaning on Major O'FLAHERTY's arm.

O'Fla. Rest yourself upon my arm; never spare it; 'tis strong enough: it has stood harder service than you can put it to. 601

Lucy. Mercy upon me, what is the matter; I am frightened out of my wits: has your ladyship had an accident?

L. Rus. O, Lucy! the most untoward one in nature: I know not how I shall repair it.

O'Fla. Never go about to repair it, my lady; ev'n build a new one; 'twas but a crazy piece of business at best.

Lucy. Bless me, is the old chariot broke down with you again?

L. Rus. Broke, child! I don't know what might have been broke, if, by great good fortune, this obliging gentleman had not been at hand to assist me. 612

Lucy. Dear madam, let me run and fetch you a cup of the cordial drops.

L. Rus. Do, *Lucy.* Alas! sir, ever since I lost my husband, my poor nerves have been shook to pieces; there hangs his beloved picture: that precious relic, and a plentiful jointure, is all that remains to console me for the best of men.

O'Fla. Let me see: i'faith a comely personage; by his fur cloak I suppose he was in the Russian service; and, by the gold chain round his neck, I should guess he had been honoured with the order of St. Catharine. 623

L. Rus. No, no; he meddled with no St. Catharines: that's the habit he wore in his mayoralty; Sir Stephen was lord-mayor of London: but he is gone, and has left me a poor, weak, solitary widow behind him.

O'Fla. By all means, then, take a strong, able, hearty man to repair his loss: if such a plain fellow as one Dennis O'Flaherty can please you, I think I may venture to say, without any disparagement to the gentleman in the fur-gown there—— 632

L. Rus. What are you going to say? Don't shock my ears with any comparisons, I desire.

O'Fla. Not I, by my soul; I don't believe there's any comparison in the case.

L. Rus. Oh, are you come? Give me the drops; I'm all in a flutter.

O'Fla. Hark'e, sweetheart, what are those same drops? Have you any more left in the bottle? I didn't care if I took a little sip of them myself. 641

Lucy. Oh, sir, they are called the cordial restorative elixir, or the nervous golden drops; they are only for ladies' cases.

O'Fla. Yes, yes, my dear, there are gentlemen as well as ladies that stand in need of those same golden drops; they'd suit my case to a tittle.

L. Rus. Well, major, did you give old Dudley my letter; and will the silly man do as I bid him, and be gone?

O'Fla. You are obeyed: he's on his march. 649

L. Rus. That's well; you have managed this matter to perfection; I didn't think he would have been so easily prevailed upon.

O'Fla. At the first word; no difficulty in life; 'twas the very thing he was determined to do before I came: I never met a more obliging gentleman.

L. Rus. Well, 'tis no matter; so I am but rid of him and his distresses: would you believe it, Major O'Flaherty, it was but this morning he sent a-begging to me for money to fit him out upon some wild-goose expedition to the coast of Africa, I know not where. 660

O'Fla. Well, you sent him what he wanted?

L. Rus. I sent him what he deserved, a flat refusal.

O'Fla. You refused him!

L. Rus. Most undoubtedly.

O'Fla. You sent him nothing!

L. Rus. Not a shilling.

O'Fla. Good morning to you—Your servant— [Going. 669

L. Rus. Hey-day! What ails the man? Where are you going? 669

O'Fla. Out of your house, before the roof falls on my head—to poor Dudley, to share the little modicum that thirty years hard service has left me; I wish it was more, for his sake.

L. Rus. Very well, sir, take your course; I sha'n't at-

tempt to stop you : I shall survive it ; it will not break my heart if I never see you more. 676

O' Fla. Break your heart ! No, o' my conscience will it not.—You preach, and you pray, and you turn up your eyes, and all the while you're as hard-hearted as an hyena—An hyena, truly ! by my soul, there isn't in the whole creation so savage an animal as a human creature without pity.

[*Exit.*

L. Rus. A hyena, truly ! Where did the fellow blunder upon that word ? Now the deuce take him for using it, and the Macaronies for inventing it ! [*Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in STOCKWELL'S House. Enter STOCKWELL and BELCOUR.

Stockwell.

GRATIFY me so far, however, Mr. Belcour, as to see Miss Rusport ; carry her the sum she wants, and return the poor girl her box of diamonds, which Dudley left in my hands ; you know what to say on the occasion better than I do : that part of your commission I leave to your own discretion, and you may season it with what gallantry you think fit.

Bel. You could not have pitch'd upon a greater bungler at gallantry than myself, if you had rummag'd every company in the city, and the whole court of aldermen into the bargain : part of your errand, however, I will do ; but whether it shall be with an ill grace or a good one, depends upon the caprice of a moment, the humour of the lady, the mode of our meeting, and a thousand undefinable small circumstances, that nevertheless determine us upon all the great occasions of life.

Stock. I persuade myself you will find Miss Rusport an ingenious, worthy, animated girl.

Bel. Why, I like her the better as a woman; but name her not to me as a wife! No, if ever I marry, it must be a staid, sober, considerate damsel, with Blood in her veins as cold as a turtle's; quick of scent as a vulture when danger's in the wind; wary and sharp-sighted as a hawk when treachery is on foot: with such a companion at my elbow, for ever whispering in my ear—have a care of this man, he's a cheat; don't go near that woman, she's a jilt; over head there's a scaffold, under foot there's a well: Oh, sir, such a woman might lead me up and down this great city without difficulty or danger; but, with a girl of Miss Rusport's complexion, heav'n and earth, sir! we should be dup'd, undone, and distracted in a fortnight. 30

Stock. Ha, ha, ha! Why you are become wondrous circumspect of a sudden, pupil; and if you can find such a prudent damsel as you describe, you have my consent—only beware how you choose; discretion is not the reigning quality amongst the fine ladies of the present time; and, I think, in Miss Rusport's particular I have given you no bad counsel.

Bell. Well, well, if you'll give me the jewels, I believe I can undertake to carry them to her; but, as for the money, I'll have nothing to do with that; Dudley would be your fittest ambassador on that occasion; and, if I mistake not, the most agreeable to the lady. 42

Stock. Why, indeed, from what I know of the matter, it may not improbably be destined to find its way into his pockets. [Exit.]

Bel. Then, depend upon it, these are not the only trinkets she means to dedicate to Captain Dudley. As for me, Stockwell indeed wants me to marry; but till I can get this

bewitching girl, this incognita, out of-my head, I can never think of any other woman. 50

Enter a Servant, and delivers a letter.

Hey-day! where can I have picked up a correspondent already! 'Tis a most execrable manuscript—Let me see—Martha Fulmer—Who is Martha Fulmer? Pshaw! I won't be at the trouble of decyphering her damn'd pot-hooks.—Hold, hold, hold; what have we got here!

‘DEAR SIR,

‘I’ve discover’d the lady you was so much smitten with, and can procure you an interview with her; if you can be as generous to a pretty girl as you was to a paltry old captain’—How did she find that out!—‘you need not despair; come to me immediately; the lady is now in my house, and expects you. 62

Yours,

MARTHA FULMER.’

O thou dear, lovely, and enchanting paper, which I was about to tear into a thousand scraps, devoutly I entreat thy pardon: I have slighted thy contents, which are delicious; slander’d thy characters, which are divine; and all the atonement I can make is implicitly to obey thy mandates.

STOCKWELL returns.

Stock. Mr. Belcour, here are the jewels; this letter encloses bills for the money; and, if you will deliver it to Miss Rusport, you’ll have no farther trouble on that score. 71

Bel. Ah, sir! the letter which I have been reading disqualifies me for delivering the letter which you have been writing: I have other game on foot; the loveliest girl my eyes ever feasted upon is started in view, and the world cannot now divert me from pursuing her.

Stock. Hey-day! what has turned you thus on a sudden?

Bel. A woman: one that can turn, and overturn me and my tottering resolutions every way she will. Oh, sir, if this is folly in me, you must rail at nature: you must chide the sun, that was vertical at my birth, and would not wink upon my nakedness, but swaddled me in the broadest, hottest glare of his meridian beams. 83

Stock. Mere rhapsody; mere childish rhapsody: the libertine's familiar plea—Nature made us, 'tis true, but we are the responsible creators of our own faults and follies.

Bel. Sir!

Stock. Slave of every face you meet, some hussy has inveigled you, some handsome profligate, (the town is full of them); and, when once fairly bankrupt in constitution, as well as fortune, nature no longer serves as your excuse for being vicious; necessity, perhaps, will stand your friend, and you'll reform. 93

Bel. You are severe.

Stock. It fits me to be so—it well becomes a father—I would say a friend—How strangely I forget myself—How difficult it is to counterfeit indifference, and put a mask upon the heart—I've struck him hard; he reddens.

Bel. How could you tempt me so? Had you not inadvertently dropped the name of father, I fear our friendship, short as it has been, would scarce have held me—But even your mistake I reverence—Give me your hand—'tis over. 103

Stock. Generous young man—let me embrace you—How shall I hide my tears? I have been to blame; because I bore you the affection of a father, I rashly took up the authority of one. I ask your pardon—pursue your course; I have no right to stop it—What would you have me do with these things?

Bel. This, if I might advise: carry the money to Miss Rusport immediately; never let generosity wait for its materials; that part of the business presses. Give me the jewels; I'll find an opportunity of delivering them into her hands; and your visit may pave the way for my reception.

[*Exit.*

Stock. Be it so: good morning to you. Farewell, advice! Away goes he upon the wing for pleasure. What various passions he awakens in me! He pains, yet pleases me; affrights, offends, yet grows upon my heart. His very failings set him off—for ever trespassing, for ever atoning, I almost think he would not be so perfect, were he free from fault: I must dissemble longer; and yet how painful the experiment!—Even now he's gone upon some wild adventure; and who can tell what mischief may befall him? O, nature, what it is to be a father! Just such a thoughtless headlong thing was I when I beguiled his mother into love.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Changes to FULMER's House. Enter FULMER and his Wife.

Ful. I tell you, Patty, you are a fool to think of bringing him and Miss Dudley together; 'twill ruin every thing, and blow your whole scheme up to the moon at once. 128

Mrs. Ful. Why, sure, Mr. Fulmer, I may be allowed to rear a chicken of my own hatching, as they say. Who first sprung the thought, but I, pray? Who first contrived the plot? Who proposed the letter, but I, I?

Ful. And who dogg'd the gentleman home? Who found out his name, fortune, connection; that he was a West Indian, fresh landed, and full of cash; a gull to our heart's

content; a hot-brain'd, head-long spark, that would run into our trap, like a wheat-ear under a turf? 137

Mrs. Ful. Hark! he's come: disappear, march; and leave the field open to my machinations. [Exit Fulmer.

SCENE III.

BELCOUR enters to her.

Bel. O, thou dear minister to my happiness, let me embrace thee? Why, thou art my polar star, my propitious constellation, by which I navigate my impatient bark into the port of pleasure and delight.

Mrs. Ful. Oh, you men are sly creatures! Do you remember now, you cruel, what you said to me this morning?

Bel. All a jest, a frolic; never think on't; bury it for ever in oblivion; thou! why thou art all over nectar and ambrosia, powder of pearl and odour of roses; thou hast the youth of Hebe, the beauty of Venus, and the pen of Sappho; but, in the name of all that's lovely, where's the lady? I expected to find her with you. 151

Mrs. Ful. No doubt you did, and these raptures were designed for her; but where have you loitered? the lady's gone, you are too late; girls of her sort are not to be kept waiting like negro slaves in your sugar plantations.

Bel. Gone! whither is she gone? tell me that I may follow her.

Mrs. Ful. Hold, hold, not so fast, young gentleman, this is a case of some delicacy; should Captain Dudley know that I introduced you to his daughter, he is a man of such scrupulous honour—— 161

Bel. What do you tell me! is she daughter to the old gentleman I met here this morning,

Mrs. Ful. The same; him you was so generous to.

Bel. There's an end of the matter then at once; it shall never be said of me, that I took advantages of the father's necessities to trepan the daughter. [Going.]

Mrs. Ful. So, so, I've made a wrong cast; he's one of your conscientious sinners I find; but I won't lose him thus — Ha, ha, ha!

170

Bel. What is it you laugh at?

Mrs. Ful. Your absolute inexperience: have you lived so very little time in this country, as not to know that between young people of equal ages the term of sister often is a cover for that of mistress? This young lady is, in that sense of the word, sister to young Dudley, and consequently daughter to my old lodger.

Bel. Indeed! are you serious?

Mrs. Ful. Can you doubt it? I must have been pretty well assur'd of that before I invited you hither.

180

Bel. That's true; she cannot be a woman of honour, and Dudley is an unconscionable young rogue to think of keeping one fine girl in pay, by raising contributions on another; he shall therefore give her up; she is a dear, bewitching, mischievous, little devil; and he shall positively give her up.

Mrs. Ful. Ay, now the freak has taken you again; I say, give her up; there's one way, indeed, and certain of success.

Bel. What's that?

Mrs. Ful. Out-bid him, never dream of out-blustering him; buy out his lease of possession, and leave her to manage the ejectment.

191

Bel. Is she so venal? Never fear me then: when beauty is the purchase, I sha'n't think much of the price.

Mrs. Ful. All things, then, will be made easy enough: let me see; some little genteel present to begin with: what have you got about you? Ay, search; I can bestow it to advantage; there's no time to be lost.

Bel. Hang it, confound it; a plague upon't, say I. I hav'n't a guinea left in my pocket; I parted from my whole stock here this morning, and have forgot to supply myself; since. 201

Mrs. Ful. Mighty well: let it pass then; there's an end; think no more of the lady, that's all.

Bel. Distraction! think no more of her? Let me only step home and provide myself, I'll be back with you in an instant.

Mrs. Ful. Pooh, pooh! that's a wretched shift: have you nothing of value about you? Money's a coarse slovenly vehicle, fit only to bribe electors in a borough; there are more graceful ways of purchasing a lady's favours; rings, trinkets, jewels! 210

Bel. Jewels! Gadso, I protest I had forgot: I have a case of jewels; but they won't do, I must not part from them: no, no, they are appropriated; they are none of my own.

Mrs. Ful. Let me see, let me see! Ay, now, this were something-like:—pretty creatures, how they sparkle! these would ensure success.

Bel. Indeed!

Mrs. Ful. These would make her your own for ever.

Bel. Then the deuce take 'em for belonging to another person! I could find in my heart to give 'em the girl, and swear I've lost them. 222

Mrs. Ful. Ay, do; say they were stolen out of your pocket.

Bel. No, hang it, that's dishonourable: here, give me the paltry things, I'll give you an order on my merchant for double their value.

Mrs. Ful. An order! No; order for me no orders upon merchants, with their value received, and three days grace; their noting, protesting, and endorsing, and all their coun-

ting-house formalities; I'll have nothing to do with them: leave your diamonds with me, and give your order for the value of them to the owner: the money would be as good as the trinkets, I warrant you. 234

Bel. Hey! how! I never thought of that: but a breach of trust; 'tis impossible; I never can consent; therefore, give me the jewels back again.

Mrs. Ful. Take 'em: I am now to tell you the lady is in this house.

Bel. In this house? 240

Mrs. Ful. Yes, sir, in this very house; but what of that? You have got what you like better; your toys, your trinkets. Go, go: oh! you're a man of a notable spirit, are you not.

Bel. Provoking creature! bring me to the sight of the dear creature, and dispose of me as you think fit.

Mrs. Ful. And of the diamonds too?

Bel. Damn 'em, I would there was not such a bauble in nature! But come, come, dispatch: if I had the throne of Dehli, I should give it to her. 249

Mrs. Ful. Swear to me then that you will keep within bounds; remember, she passes for the sister of young Dudley. Oh! if you come to your flights and your rhapsodies, she'll be off in an instant.

Bel. Never fear me.

Mrs. Ful. You must expect to hear her talk of her father, as she calls him, and her brother, and your bounty to her family.

Bel. Ay, ay, never mind what she talks of, only bring her.

Mrs. Ful. You'll be prepared upon that head? 260

Bel. I shall be prepared, never fear: away with you.

Mrs. Ful. But hold, I had forgot: not a word of the diamonds; leave that matter to my management.

Bel. Hell and vexation ! Get out of the room, or I shall run distracted. [*Exit Mrs. Fulmer.*] Of a certain, Belcour, thou art born to be the fool of woman : sure no man sins with so much repentance, or repents with so little amendment as I do. I cannot give away another person's property ; honour forbids me : and I positively cannot give up the girl ; love, passion, constitution, every thing protests against that. How shall I decide ? I cannot bring myself to break a trust, and I am not at present in the humour to baulk my inclination. Is there no middle way ? Let me consider.—There is, there is : my good genius has presented me with one ; apt, obvious, honourable : the girl shall not go without her baubles—I'll not go without the girl—Miss Rusport sha'n't lose her diamonds—I'll save Dudley from destruction—and every party shall be a gainer by the project.

SCENE IV.

Enter Mrs. FULMER, introducing Miss DUDLEY.

Mrs. Ful. Miss Dudley, this is the worthy gentleman you wish to see ; this is Mr. Belcour. 280

Louisa. As I live, the very man, that beset me in the streets ! [*Aside.*

Bel. An angel, by this light ! Oh, I am gone part all retrieving ! [*Aside.*

Lou. Mrs. Fulmer, sir, informs me you are the gentleman from whom my father has received such civilities.

Bel. Oh ! never name 'em.

Lou. Pardon me, Mr. Belcour, they must be both named and remembered ; and if my father was here— 289

Bel. I am much better pleased with his representative.

Lou. That title is my brother's sir ; I have no claim to it.

Bel. I believe it.

Lou. But as neither he nor my father were fortunate enough to be at home, I could not resist the opportunity——

Bel. Nor I neither, by my soul, madam : let us improve it, therefore. I am in love with you to distraction ; I was charmed at the first glance ; I attempted to accost you ; you fled ; I followed ; but was defeated of an interview : at length I have obtained one, and seize the opportunity of casting my person and my fortune at your feet. 299

Lou. You astonish me. Are you in your senses, or do you make a jest of my misfortunes ? Do you ground pretences on your generosity, or do you make a practice of this folly with every woman you meet.

Bel. Upon my life, no : as you are the handsomest woman I ever met, so you are the first to whom I ever made the like professions : as for my generosity, madam, I must refer you on that score to this good lady, who I believe has something to offer in my behalf. 308

Lou. Don't build upon that, sir ; I must have better proofs of your generosity, than the mere divestment of a little superfluous dross, before I can credit the sincerity of a profession so abruptly delivered. [Exit hastily.

Bel. O ye gods and goddesses, how her anger animates her beauty ! [Going out.

Mrs. Ful. Stay, sir ; if you stir a step after her, I renounce your interest for ever : why you'll ruin every thing.

Bel. Well, I must have her, cost what it will : I see she understands her own value, though ; a little superfluous dross, truly ! She must have better proofs of my generosity.

Mrs. Ful. 'Tis exactly as I told you ; your money she calls dross ; she's too proud to stain her fingers with your coin : bate your hook well with jewels ; try that experiment, and she's your own. 323

Bel. Take 'em; let 'em go; lay 'em at her feet; I must get out of the scrape as I can; my propensity is irresistible: there; you have 'em; they are yours; they are hers; but remember they are a trust; I commit them to her keeping till I can buy 'em off with something she shall think more valuable; now tell me when shall I meet her? 329

Mrs. Ful. How can I tell that? Don't you see what an alarm you've put her into? Oh, you're a rare one! But go your ways for this while; leave her to my management, and come to me at seven this evening; but remember not to bring empty pockets with you—Ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE V.

Lady RUSPORT's House. Enter Miss RUSPORT, followed by a Servant.

Charl. Desire Mr. Stockwell to walk in. [*Exit Serv.*]

Enter STOCKWELL.

Stock. Madam, your most obedient servant: I am honoured with your commands, by Captain Dudley, and have brought the money with me as you directed; I understand the sum you have occasion for is two hundred pounds.

Char. It is, sir; I am quite confounded at your taking this trouble upon yourself, Mr. Stockwell. 341

Stock. There is a bank-note, madam, to the amount: your jewels are in safe hands, and will be delivered to you directly. If I had been happy in being better known to you, I should have hoped you would not have thought it necessary to place a deposit in my hands for so trifling a sum as you have now required me to supply you with.

Char. The baubles I sent you may very well be spared; and, as they are the only security in my present situation I

can give you, I could wish you would retain them in your hands : when I am of age (which, if I live a few months, I shall be), I will replace your favour with thanks. 352

Stock. It is obvious, Miss Rusport, that your charms will suffer no impeachment by the absence of those superficial ornaments ; but they should be seen in the suite of a woman of fashion, not as creditors, to whom you are indebted for your appearance, but as subservient attendants, which help to make up your equipage.

Char. Mr. Stockwell is determined not to wrong the confidence I reposed in his politeness. 360

Stock. I have only to request, madam, that you will allow Mr. Belcour, a young gentleman in whose happiness I particularly interest myself, to have the honour of delivering you the box of jewels.

Char. Most gladly ; any friend of yours cannot fail of being welcome here.

Stock. I flatter myself you will not find him totally undeserving your good opinion ; an education, not of the strictest kind, and strong animal spirits, are apt sometimes to betray him into youthful irregularities ; but an high principle of honour, and an uncommon benevolence, in the eye of candour will, I hope, atone for any faults, by which these good qualities are not impaired. 373

Char. I dare say Mr. Belcour's behaviour wants no apology ; we've no right so be over strict in canvassing the morals of a common acquaintance.

Stock. I wish it may be my happiness to see Mr. Belcour in the list, not of your common, but particular acquaintance—of your friends, Miss Rusport—I dare not be more explicit. 380

Char. Nor need you, Mr. Stockwell : I shall be studious to deserve his friendship ; and, though I have long since un-

alterably placed my affection on another, I trust I have not left myself insensible to the merits of Mr. Belcour; and hope that neither he nor you will, for that reason, think me less worthy of your good opinion and regards. 386

Stock. Miss Rusport, I sincerely wish you happy: I have no doubt you have placed your affection on a deserving man; and I have no right to combat your choice. [Exit.

Char. How honourable is that behaviour! Now, if Charles were here, I should be happy. The old lady is so fond of her new Irish acquaintance, that I have the whole house at my disposal. [Exit.

SCENE VI.

Enter BELCOUR, preceded by a Servant.

Serv. I ask your honour's pardon; I thought my young lady was here: who shall I inform her would speak to her?

Bel. Belcour is my name, sir; and pray beg your lady to put herself in no hurry on my account; for I'd sooner see the devil than see her face.—[Exit Servant.]—In the name of all that's mischievous, why did Stockwell drive me hither in such haste? A pretty figure, truly, I shall make! an ambassador without credentials. Blockhead that I was, to charge myself with her diamonds—officious, meddling puppy! Now they are irretrievably gone: that suspicious jade, Fulmer, wou'dn't part even with a sight of them, tho' I would have ransomed them at twice their value.—Now must I trust to my poor wits to bring me off: a lamentable dependance. Fortune be my helper.—Here comes the girl.—If she is noble-minded, as she is said to be, she will forgive me—if not, 'tis a lost cause; for I have not thought of one word in my excuse. 410

SCENE VII.*Enter CHARLOTTE.*

Char. Mr. Belcour, I'm proud to see you : your friend, Mr. Stockwell, prepared me to expect this honour : and I am happy in the opportunity of being known to you.

Bel. A fine girl, by my soul ! Now what a cursed hang-dog do I look like ! *[Aside.*

Char. You are newly arrived in this country, sir ?

Bel. Just landed, madam, just set a-shore, with a large cargo of Muscavado sugars, rum puncheons, mahogany slabs, wet sweetmeats, and green parroquets.

Char. May I ask you how you like London, sir ? 420

Bel. To admiration : I think the town and the town's-folk are exactly suited ; 'tis a great, rich, overgrown, noisy, tumultuous place : the whole morning is a bustle to get money, and the whole afternoon is a hurry to spend it.

Char. Are these all the observations you have made ?

Bel. No, madam ; I have observed the women are very captivating, and the men very soon caught.

Char. Ay, indeed ! Whence do you draw that conclusion ?

Bel. From infallible guides ; the first remark I collect from what I now see, the second from what I now feel. 431

Char. Oh, the deuce take you ! But, to wave the subject—I believe, sir, this was a visit of business, not compliment : was it not ?

Bel. Ay—now comes on my execution.

Char. You have some foolish trinkets of mine, Mr. Belcour ; hav'n't you ?

Bel. No, in truth, they are gone in search of a trinket still more foolish than themselves. *[Aside.*

Char. Some diamonds, I mean, sir. Mr. Stockwell informed me you was charged with 'em. 441

Bel. Oh, yes, madam—but I have the most treacherous memory in life—here they are : pray, put em up ; they're all right ; you need not examine 'em. [*Gives a box.*]

Char. Hey-day—right, sir ! Why these are not my diamonds ; these are quite different ; and, as it should seem, of much greater value.

Bel. Upon my life, I'm glad on't ; for then I hope you value 'em more than your own.

Char. As a purchaser I should, but not as an owner : you mistake ; these belong to somebody else. 451

Bel. 'Tis yours, I'm afraid, that belong to somebody else.

Char. What is it you mean ? I must insist on your taking 'em back again.

Bel. Pray, madam, don't do that ; I shall infallibly lose them : I have the worst luck with diamonds of any man living.

Char. That you might well say, was you to give me these in the place of mine : but, pray, sir, what is the reason of all this ? Why have you changed the jewels, and where have you disposed of mine ? 462

Bel. Miss Rusport, I cannot invent a lie for my life ; and, if it was to save it, I cou'dn't tell one : I am an idle, dissipated, unthinking fellow, not worth your notice : in short, I am a West Indian ; and you must try me according to the charter of my colony, not by a jury of English spinsters.—The truth is, I've given away your jewels ; caught with a pair of sparkling eyes, whose lustre blinded theirs, I served your property as I should my own, and lavished it away.—Let me not totally despair of your forgiveness : I frequently do wrong, but never with impunity ; if your displeasure is

added to my own, my punishment will be too severe. When I parted from the jewels, I had not the honour of knowing their owner.

475

Char. Mr. Belcour, your sincerity charms me; I enter at once into your character, and I make all the allowances for it you can desire. I take your jewels for the present, because I know there is no other way of reconciling you to yourself; but, if I give way to your spirit in one point, you must yield to mine in another: remember, I will not keep more than the value of my own jewels: there is no need to be pillaged by more than one woman at a time, sir.

Bel. Now, may every blessing that can crown your virtues, and reward your beauty, be showered upon you!—May you meet admiration without envy, love without jealousy, and old age without malady!—May the man of your heart be ever constant, and you never meet a less penitent or less grateful offender than myself!

Enter Servant, who delivers a Letter.

Char. Does your letter require such haste? 490

Serv. I was bade to give it into your own hands, madam.

Char. From Charles Dudley, I see.—Have I your permission? Good Heaven, what do I read!—Mr. Belcour, you are concerned in this—‘Dear Charlotte, in the midst of our distress, Providence has cast a benefactor in our way, after the most unexpected manner: a young West Indian, rich, and with a warmth of heart peculiar to his climate, has rescued my father from his troubles, satisfied his wants, and enabled him to accomplish his exchange: when I relate to you the manner in which this was done, you will be charmed; I can only now add, that it was by chance we found out that his name is Belcour, and that he is a friend of Mr. Stockwell’s. I lose not a moment’s time in making

you acquainted with this fortunate event, for reasons which delicacy obliges me to suppress; but, perhaps, if you have not received the money on your jewels, you will not think it necessary now to do it. I have the honour to be,

Dear madam,

Most faithfully yours,

509

CHARLES DUDLEY.

Is this your doing, sir? Never was generosity so worthily exerted.

Bel. Or so greatly overpaid.

Char. After what you have now done for this noble, but indigent family, let me not scruple to unfold the whole situation of my heart to you. Know then, sir (and don't think the worse of me for the frankness of my declaration), that such is my attachment to the son of that worthy officer, whom you relieved, that the moment I am of age, and in possession of my fortune, I should hold myself the happiest of women to share it with young Dudley.

521

Bel. Say you so, madam? then let me perish if I don't love and reverence you above all woman-kind; and, if such is your generous resolution, never wait till you're of age; life is too short, pleasure too fugitive; the soul grows narrower every hour; I'll equip you for your escape; I'll convey you to the man of your heart, and away with you then to the first hospitable parson that will take you in.

Char. O blessed be the torrid zone for ever, whose rapid vegetation quickens nature into such benignity! These latitudes are made for politics and philosophy; friendship has no root in this soil. But, had I spirit to accept your offer, which is not improbable, wou'dn't it be a mortifying thing for a fond girl to find herself mistaken, and sent back to her home like a vagrant?—And such, for what I know, might be my case.

536

Bel. Then he ought to be proscribed the society of mankind for ever—Ay, ay, 'tis the sham sister that makes him thus indifferent; 'twill be a meritorious office to take that girl out of the way.

SCENE VIII.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Miss Dudley to wait on you, madam.

Bel. Who?

Serv. Miss Dudley.

Char. What's the matter, Mr. Belcour? Are you frightened at the name of a pretty girl? 'Tis the sister of him we were speaking of—Pray admit her. 546

Bel. The sister! So, so; he has imposed on her too—
This is an extraordinary visit, truly. Upon my soul, the assurance of some folks is not to be accounted for.

Char. I insist upon your not running away; you'll be charmed with Louisa Dudley.

Bel. Oh, yes, I am charmed with her.

Char. You've seen her then, have you?

Bel. Yes, yes, I've seen her.

Char. Well, isn't she a delightful girl?

Bel. Very delightful.

Char. Why, you answer as if you was in a court of justice. O' my conscience I believe you are caught: I've a notion she has tricked you out of your heart. 559

Bel. I believe she has, and you out of your jewels; for, to tell you the truth, she's the very person I gave 'em to.

Char. You gave her my jewels! Louisa Dudley my jewels? Admirable! inimitable! Oh, the sly little jade! But hush, here she comes; I don't know how I shall keep my countenance.

Enter LOUISA.

My dear, I'm rejoiced to see you : how d'ye do ! I beg leave to introduce Mr. Belcour, a very worthy friend of mine : I believe, Louisa, you have seen him before ?

Lou. I have met the gentleman. 569

Char. You have met the gentleman : well, sir, and you have met the lady : in short, you have met each other ; why then don't you speak to each other ? How you both stand ! tongue-tied and fixed as statues—Ha, ha, ha ! Why, you'll fall asleep by and by.

Lou. Fye upon you, fye upon you ! is this fair ?

Bel. Upon my soul, I never looked so like a fool in my life : the assurance of that girl puts me quite down. [*Aside.*

Char. Sir—Mr. Belcour—Was it your pleasure to advance any thing ? Not a syllable. Come, Louisa, women's wit, they say, is never at a loss—Nor you neither ? Speechless both——Why, you was merry enough before this lady came in. 582

Lou. I am sorry I have been any interruption to your happiness, sir.

Bel. Madam !

Char. Madam ! is that all you can say ? But come, my dear girl, I won't tease you. Apropos, I must shew you what a present this dumb gentleman has made me : are not these handsome diamonds ?

Lou. Yes, indeed, they seem very fine ; but I am no judge of these things. 591

Char. Oh, you wicked little hypocrite, you are no judge of these things, Louisa ; you have no diamonds, not you.

Lou. You know I hav'n't, Miss Rusport : you know those things are infinitely above my reach.

Char. Ha, ha, ha !

Bel. She does tell a lie with an admirable countenance, that's true enough. 598

Lou. What ails you, Charlotte? What impertinence have I been guilty of, that you should find it necessary to humble me at such a rate? If you are happy, long may you be so; but, surely, it can be no addition to it to make me miserable.

Char. So serious! There must be some mystery in this—Mr. Belcour, will you leave us together? You see I treat you with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance already.

Bel. Oh, by all means, pray command me. Miss Rusport, I'm your most obedient. By your condescension in accepting these poor trifles, I am under eternal obligations to you—To you, Miss Dudley, I shall not offer a word on that subject: you despise finery; you have a soul above it; I adore your spirit; I was rather unprepared for meeting you here; but I shall hope for an opportunity of making myself better known to you. [Exit.

SCENE IX.

CHARLOTTE and LOUISA.

Char. Louisa Dudley, you surprise me; I never saw you act thus before: can't you bear a little innocent raillery before the man of your heart?

Lou. The man of my heart, madam? Be assured I never was so visionary to aspire to any man whom Miss Rusport honours with her choice. 620

Char. My choice, my dear? Why we are playing at cross purposes: how enter'd it into your head that Mr. Belcour was the man of my choice?

Lou. Why, didn't he present you with those diamonds?

Char. Well, perhaps he did—and pray, Louisa, have you no diamonds?

Lou. I diamonds, truly!—Who should give me diamonds?

Char. Who, but this very gentleman?—apropos, here comes your brother. 629

SCENE X.

Enter CHARLES.

I insist upon referring our dispute to him: your sister and I, Charles, have a quarrel; Belcour, the hero of your letter, has just left us—some how or other, Louisa's bright eyes have caught him; and the poor fellow's fallen desperately in love with her—(don't interrupt me, hussy)—Well, that's excusable enough, you'll say; but the jest of the story is, that this hair-brain'd spark, who does nothing like other people, has given her the very identical jewels which you pledged for me to Mr. Stockwell; and will you believe that this little demure slut made up a face, and squeezed out three or four hypocritical tears, because I rallied her about it. 640

Charles. I'm all astonishment! Louisa, tell me, without reserve, has Mr. Belcour given you any diamonds?

Lou. None, upon my honour.

Charles. Has he made any professions to you?

Lou. He has; but altogether in a stile so whimsical and capricious, that the best which can be said of them is to tell you, that they seem'd more the result of good spirits than good manners.

Char. Ay, ay, now the murder's out; he's in love with her, and she has no very great dislike to him; trust to my observation, Charles, for that: as to the diamonds, there's some mistake about them, and you must clear it up: three

minutes conversation with him will put every thing in a right train; go, go, Charles, 'tis a brother's business; about it instantly; ten to one you'll find him over the way at Mr. Stockwell's.

Charles. I confess I'm impatient to have the case clear'd up; I'll take your advice, and find him out: good bye to you. 659

Char. Your servant; my life upon it you'll find Belcour a man of honour. Come, Louisa, let us adjourn to my dressing-room; I've a little private business to transact with you, before the old lady comes up to tea and interrupts us.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

FULMER'S HOUSE. *Enter FULMER and Mrs. FULMER.*

Fulmer.

PATTY, wasn't Mr. Belcour with you?

Mrs. Ful. He was; and is now shut up in my chamber, in high expectation of an interview with Miss Dudley: she's at present with her brother, and 'twas with some difficulty I persuaded my hot-headed spark to wait till he has left her.

Ful. Well, child, and what then?

Mrs. Ful. Why then, Mr. Fulmer, I think it will be time for you and me to steal a march, and be gone.

Ful. So, this is all the fruit of your ingenious project; a shameful overthrow, or a sudden flight. 10

Mrs. Ful. Why, my project was a mere impromptu, and can at worst but quicken our departure a few days; you know we had fairly outliv'd our credit here, and a trip to Bologne is no ways unseasonable. Nay, never droop, man. —Hark! Hark! here's enough to bear charges.

[*Shewing a purse.*]

Ful. Let me see, let me see: this weighs well; this is of the right sort: why your West Indian bled freely.

Mrs. Ful. But that's not all: look here! Here are the sparklers! [*Shewing the jewels.*] Now what d'ye think of my performances? Heh! a foolish scheme, isn't it—a silly woman—?

21

Ful. Thou art a Judith, a Joan of Arc, and I'll march under thy banners, girl, to the world's end. Come, let's begone; I've little to regret; my creditors may share the old books amongst them; they'll have occasion for philosophy to support their loss; they'll find enough upon my shelves: the world is my library; I read mankind—Now, Patty, lead the way.

Mrs. Ful. Adieu, Belcour!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY and LOUISA.

Charles. Well, Louisa, I confess the force of what you say: I accept Miss Rusport's bounty; and, when you see my generous Charlotte, tell her—but have a care, there is a selfishness even in gratitude, when it is too profuse; to be overthankful for any one favour, is in effect to lay out for another: the best return I could make my benefactress would be never to see her more.

Lou. I understand you.

37

Charles. We that are poor, Louisa, should be cautious: for this reason, I would guard you against Belcour; at least till I can unravel the mystery of Miss Rusport's diamonds. I was disappointed of finding him at Mr. Stockwell's, and am now going in search of him again: he may intend honourably; but, I confess to you, I am stagger'd; think no more of him, therefore, for the present: of this be sure,

while I have life, and you have honour, I will protect you, or perish in your defence. [Exit.

Lou. Think of him no more ! Well, I'll obey ; but if a wandering uninvited thought should creep by chance into my bosom, must I not give the harmless wretch a shelter ? Oh ! yes ; the great artificer of the human heart knows every thread he wove into its fabric, nor puts his work to harder uses than it was made to bear : my wishes, then, my guiltless ones, I mean, are free : how fast they spring within me, at that sentence ! Down, down, ye busy creatures ! Whither would you carry me ? Ah ! there is one amongst you, a forward, new intruder, that, in the likeness of an offending, generous man, grows into favour with my heart. Fye, fye upon it ! Belcour pursues, insults me ; yet, such is the fatality of my condition, that what should rouse resentment, only calls up love. 60

SCENE III.

BELCOUR enters to her.

Bel. Alone, by all that's happy !

Lou. Ah !

Bel. Oh ! shriek not, start not, stir not, loveliest creature ! but let me kneel, and gaze upon your beauties.

Lou. Sir ! Mr. Belcour, rise ! What is it you do ?

Bel. See, I obey you ; mould me as you will, behold your ready servant ! New to your country, ignorant of your manners, habits, and desires, I put myself into your hands for instruction ; make me only such as you can like yourself, and I shall be happy. 70

Lou. I must not hear this, Mr. Belcour : go ; should he that parted from me but this minute now return, I tremble for the consequence.

Bel. Fear nothing; let him come: I love you, madam; he'll find it hard to make me unsay that.

Lou. You terrify me; your impetuous temper frightens me; you know my situation; it is not generous to pursue me thus. 78

Bel. True; I do know your situation; your real one, Miss Dudley, and am resolv'd to snatch you from it; 'twill be a meritorious act; the old Captain shall rejoice; Miss Rusport shall be made happy; and even he, even your beloved brother, with whose resentment you threaten me, shall in the end applaud and thank me. Come, thou'rt a dear enchanting girl, and I'm determin'd not to live a minute longer without thee.

Lou. Hold, are you mad? I see you are a bold assuming man, and know not where to stop. 88

Bel. Who that beholds such beauty can? By Heaven you put my blood into a flame. Provoking girl! is it within the stretch of my fortune to content you? What is it you can further ask that I am not ready to grant?

Lou. Yes, with the same facility that you bestowed upon me Miss Rusport's diamonds. For shame! for shame! was that a manly story?

Bel. So! so! these devilish diamonds meet me every where—Let me perish if I meant you any harm. Oh! I could tear my tongue out for saying a word about the matter.

Lou. Go to her then, and contradict it; till that is done, my reputation is at stake. 100

Bel. Her reputation! Now she has got upon that, she'll go on for ever.—What is there I will not do for your sake? I will go to Miss Rusport.

Lou. Do so; restore her own jewels to her, which I suppose you kept back for the purpose of presenting others to her of a greater value; but for the future, Mr. Belcour, when

you would do a gallant action to that lady, don't let it be at my expence.

Bel. I see where she points : she is willing enough to give up Miss Rusport's diamonds, now she finds she shall be a gainer by the exchange. Be it so ; 'tis what I wish'd.— Well, madam, I will return Miss Rusport her own jewels, and you shall have others of tenfold their value.

Lou. No, sir, you err most widely ; it is my good opinion, not my vanity, which you must bribe. 115

Bel. Why, what the devil would she have now ?—Miss Dudley, it is my wish to obey and please you, but I have some apprehension that we mistake each other.

Lou. I think we do : tell me then, in few words, what it is you aim at. 120

Bel. In few words, then, and in plain honesty, I must tell you, so entirely am I captivated with you, that had you but been such as it would have become me to have called my wife, I had been happy in knowing you by that name ; as it is, you are welcome to partake my fortune, give me in return your person, give me pleasure, give me love ; free, disencumber'd, anti-matrimonial love.

Lou. Stand off, and let me never see you more.

Bel. Hold, hold, thou dear, tormenting, tantalizing girl ! Upon my knees I swear you shall not stir till you've consented to my bliss. 131

Lou. Unhand me, sir : O Charles ! protect me, rescue me, redress me. [Exit.

SCENE IV.

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY.

Charles. How's this ! Rise, villain, and defend yourself.

Bel. Villain !

Charles. The man who wrongs that lady is a villain—
Draw!

Bel. Never fear me, young gentleman; brand me for a coward if I baulk you.

Charles. Yet hold! Let me not be too hasty: your name, I think, is Belcour. 141

Bel. Well, sir.

Charles. How is it, Mr. Belcour, you have done this mean, unmanly wrong; beneath the mask of generosity to give this fatal stab to our domestic peace? You might have had my thanks, my blessing; take my defiance now. 'Tis Dudley speaks to you, the brother, the protector of that injur'd lady.

Bel. The brother? Give yourself a truer title.

Charles. What is't you mean? 150

Bel. Come, come, I know both her and you: I found you, sir, (but how or why I know not) in the good graces of Miss Rusport—(yes, colour at the name!)—I gave you no disturbance there, never broke in upon you in that rich and plenteous quarter; but, when I could have blasted all your projects with a word, spar'd you, in foolish pity spar'd you, nor rous'd her from the fond credulity in which your artifice had lull'd her.

Charles. No, sir, nor boasted to her of the splendid present you had made my poor Louisa; the diamonds, Mr. Belcour. How was that? What can you plead to that arraignment? 162

Bel. You question me too late; the name of Belcour and of villain never met before: had you enquir'd of me before you utter'd that rash word, you might have sav'd yourself or me a mortal error: now, sir, I neither give nor take an explanation; so, come on! [They fight.

SCENE V.

Enter LOUISA, and afterwards O'FLAHERTY.

Lou. Hold, hold, for Heaven's sake hold!—Charles!—
Mr. Belcour!—Help! Sir, sir, make haste, they'll murder one another. 170

O'Fla. Hell and confusion! what's all this uproar for?—
Cann't you leave of cutting one another's throats, and mind what the poor girl says to you? You've done a notable thing, hav'n't you both, to put her into such a flurry?—I think o' my conscience she's the most frightened of the three.

Charles. Dear Louisa, recollect yourself; why did you interfere? 'Tis in your cause.

Bel. Now could I kill him for caressing her. 178

O'Fla. O, sir, your most obedient! You are the gentleman I had the honour of meeting here before; you was then running off at full speed like a Calmuck; now you are tilting and driving like a Bedlamite with this lad here, that seems as mad as yourself; 'tis pity but your country had a little more employment for you both.

Bel. Mr. Dudley, when you've recover'd the lady, you know where I am to be found. [Exit.

O'Fla. Well, then, cann't you stay where you are, and that will save the trouble of looking after you? Yon volatile fellow thinks to give a man the meeting by getting out of his way: by my soul, 'tis a round-about method that of his. But I think he call'd you Dudley. Hark'e, young man, are you son of my friend the old captain? 192

Charles. I am. Help me to convey this lady to her chamber, and I shall be more at leisure to answer your questions.

O'Fla. Ay, will I: come along, pretty one; if you've had wrong done you, young man, you need look no further

for a second; Dennis O'Flaherty's your man for that: but never draw your sword before a woman, Dudley; damn it, never, while you live, draw your sword before a woman. 199

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

Lady RUSPORT's House. Enter Lady RUSPORT and Servant.

Serv. An elderly gentleman, who says his name is Varland, desires leave to wait on your ladyship.

L. Rus. Shew him in; the very man I wish to see: Varland, he was Sir Oliver's solicitor, and privy to all his affairs; he brings some good tidings; some fresh mortgage, or another bond come to light; they start up every day.

Enter VARLAND.

Mr. Varland, I'm glad to see you; you're heartily welcome, honest Mr. Varland; you and I hav'n't met since our late irreparable loss: how have you passed your time this age?

Var. Truly, my lady, ill enough: I thought I must have followed good Sir Oliver. 210

L. Rus. Alack-a-day, poor man!—Well, Mr. Varland, you find me here overwhelmed with trouble and fatigue; torn to pieces with a multiplicity of affairs; a great fortune poured upon me unsought for and unexpected: 'twas my good father's will and pleasure it should be so, and I must submit.

Var. Your ladyship inherits under a will made in the year forty-five, immediately after Captain Dudley's marriage with your sister.

L. Rus. I do so, Mr. Varland; I do so.

Var. I well remember it; I engrossed every syllable; but I am surprised to find your ladyship set so little store by this vast accession. 222

L. Rus. Why you know, Mr. Varland, I am a moderate woman ; I had enough before ; a small matter satisfies me ; and Sir Stephen Rusport (Heaven be his portion !) took care I shouldn't want that.

Var. Very true, very true, he did so ; and I am overjoyed at finding your ladyship in this disposition ; for, truth to say, I was not without apprehension the news I have to communicate would have been of some prejudice to your ladyship's tranquillity. 231

L. Rus. News, sir ! What news have you for me ?

Var. Nay, nothing to alarm you ; a trifle, in your present way of thinking : I have a will of Sir Oliver's you have never seen.

L. Rus. A will ! impossible ! How came you by it, pray ?

Var. I drew it up, at his command, in his last illness : it will save you a world of trouble : it gives his whole estate from you to his grandson, Charles Dudley.

L. Rus. To Dudley ! His estate to Charles Dudley !—I can't support it ! I shall faint ! You've killed me, you vile man ! I never shall survive it ! 242

Var. Look'e there, now : I protest, I thought you would have rejoiced at being clear of the incumbrance.

L. Rus. 'Tis false ; 'tis all a forgery, concerted between you and Dudley ; why else did I never hear of it before ?

Var. Have patience, my lady, and I'll tell you.—By Sir Oliver's direction I was to deliver this will into no hands but his grandson, Dudley's : the young gentleman happened to be then in Scotland ; I was dispatch'd thither in search of him : the hurry and fatigue of my journey brought on a fever by the way, which confined me in extreme danger for several days ; upon my recovery, I pursued my journey, found young Dudley had left Scotland in the interim, and am now directed hither ; where, as soon as I can find him,

doubtless I shall discharge my conscience, and fulfil my commission.

L. Rus. Dudley then, as yet, knows nothing of this will?

Var. Nothing; that secret rests with me. 259

L. Rus. A thought occurs: by this fellow's talking of his conscience, I should guess it was upon sale. [*Aside.*] Come, Mr. Varland, if 'tis as you say, I must submit. I was somewhat flurried at first, and forgot myself; I ask your pardon: this is no place to talk of business; step with me into my room; we will there compare the will, and resolve accordingly—Oh! would your fever had you, and I had your paper. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

Enter Miss RUSPORT, CHARLES, and O'FLAHERTY.

Char. So, so! My lady and her lawyer have retired to close confabulation: now, major, if you are the generous man I take you for, grant me one favour. 270

O'Fla. Faith will I, and not think much of my generosity neither; for, though it may not be in my power to do the favour you ask, look you, it can never be in my heart to refuse it.

Charles. Could this man's tongue do justice to his thoughts, how eloquent would he be! [*Aside.*]

Char. Plant yourself then in that room: keep guard, for a few moments, upon the enemy's motions, in the chamber beyond; and, if they should attempt a sally, stop their march a moment, till your friend here can make good his retreat down the back-stairs. 281

O'Fla. A word to the wise! I'm an old campaigner; make

the best use of your time ; and trust me for tying the old cat up to the picket.

Char. Hush, hush, not so loud.

Charles. 'Tis the office of a centinel, major, you have undertaken, rather than that of a field officer.

O'Fla. 'Tis the office of a friend, my dear boy ; and therefore no disgrace to a general. [Exeunt.]

SCENE VIII.

Enter CHARLES and Miss RUSPORT.

Char. Well, Charles, will you commit yourself to me for a few minutes ? 290

Charles. Most readily : and let me, before one goes by, tender you the only payment I can ever make for your abundant generosity.

Char. Hold, hold ! so vile a thing as money must not come between us. What shall I say ! O, Charles ! O, Dudley ! what difficulties have you thrown upon me ! Familiarly as we have lived, I shrink not at what I'm doing ; and, anxiously as I have sought this opportunity, my fears almost persuade me to abandon it.

Charles. You alarm me. 300

Char. Your looks and actions have been so distant, and at this moment are so deterring, that, was it not for the hope that delicacy, and not disgust, inspires this conduct in you, I should sink with shame and apprehension : but time presses, and I must speak—and plainly too—Was you now in possession of your grandfather's estate, as justly you ought to be ; and, was you inclined to seek a companion for life, should you, or should you not, in that case, honour your unworthy Charlotte with your choice ? 309

Charles. My unworthy Charlotte! So judge me Heaven, there is not a circumstance on earth so valuable as your happiness, so dear to me as your person; but to bring poverty, disgrace, reproach from friends, ridicule from all the world, upon a generous benefactress; thievishly to steal into an open, unreserved, ingenuous heart, O, Charlotte! dear, unhappy girl, it is not to be done. 316

Char. Nay, now you rate too highly the poor advantages fortune alone has given me over you: how otherwise could we bring our merits to any balance? Come, my dear Charles, I have enough; make that enough still more, by sharing it with me: sole heiress of my father's fortune, a short time will put it in my disposal; in the mean while you will be sent to join your regiment: let us prevent a separation, by setting out this very night for that happy country where marriage still is free: carry me this moment to Belcour's lodgings.

Charles. Belcour's!—The name is ominous; there's murder in it: bloody inexorable honour! [Aside.]

Char. D'ye pause? Put me into his hands while you provide the means for our escape: he is the most generous, the most honourable of men. 331

Charles. Honourable! most honourable!

Char. Can you doubt it? Do you demur? Have you forgot your letter? Why, Belcour 'twas that prompted me to this proposal, that promised to supply the means, that nobly offer'd his unask'd assistance——

Enter O'FLAHERTY hastily.

O'Fla. Run, run, for holy St. Antony's sake, to horse and away! The conference is broke up, and the old lady advances upon a full Piedmontese trot, within pistol-shot of your encampment. 340

Char. Here, here, down the back-stairs ! O, Charles, remember me !

Charles. Farewell ! Now, now I feel myself a coward.

[*Exit.*

Char. What does he mean ?

O'Fla. Ask no questions, but be gone. She has cooled the lad's courage, and wonders he feels like a coward.— There's a damn'd deal of mischief brewing between this hyena and her lawyer : egad I'll step behind this screen and listen : a good soldier must sometimes fight in ambush as well as open field.

[*Retires.*

SCENE IX.

Lady RUSPORT and VARLAND.

L. Rus. Sure I heard somebody. Hark ! No ; only the servants going down the back stairs. Well, Mr. Varland, I think then we are agreed : you'll take my money ; and your conscience no longer stands in your way.

354

Var. Your father was my benefactor ; his will ought to be sacred ; but, if I commit it to the flames, how will he be the wiser ? Dudley, 'tis true, has done me no harm ; but five thousand pounds will do me much good : so, in short, madam, I take your offer ; I will confer with my clerk, who witnessed the will ; and to-morrow morning put it into your hands, upon condition you put five thousand good pounds into mine.

362

L. Rus. 'Tis a bargain : I'll be ready for you : farewell.

[*Exit.*

Var. Let me consider—Five thousand pounds prompt payment for destroying this scrap of paper, not worth five farthings ; 'tis a fortune easily earned ; yes, and 'tis another

man's fortune easily thrown away: 'tis a good round sum to be paid down at once for a bribe; but 'tis a damned rogue's trick in me to take it. 369

O'Fla. So, so! this fellow speaks truth to himself, though he lies to other people——But hush! [*Aside.*]

Var. 'Tis breaking the trust of my benefactor; that's a foul crime; but he's dead, and can never reproach me with it: and 'tis robbing young Dudley of his lawful patrimony; that's a hard case; but he's alive, and knows nothing of the matter.

O'Fla. These lawyers are so used to bring off the rogues of others, that they are never without an excuse for their own. [*Aside.*]

Var. Were I assured now that Dudley would give me half the money for producing this will, that Lady Rusport does for concealing it, I would deal with him, and be an honest man at half price; I wish every gentleman of my profession could lay his hand on his heart and say the same thing.

O'Fla. A bargain, old gentleman! Nay, never start nor stare, you wasn't afraid of your own conscience, never be afraid of me.

Var. Of you, sir; who are you, pray?

O'Fla. I'll tell you who I am: you seem to wish to be honest, but want the heart to set about it; now, I am the very man in the world to make you so; for, if you do not give me up that paper this very instant, by the soul of me, fellow, I will not leave one whole bone in your skin that shan't be broken. 394

Var. What right have you, pray, to take this paper from me?

O'Fla. What right have you, pray, to keep it from young Dudley? I don't know what it contains, but I am apt to think it will be safer in my hands than in yours; therefore give it

me without more words, and save yourself a beating: do now, you had best. 401

Var. Well, sir, I may as well make a grace of necessity. There! I have acquitted my conscience at the expence of five thousand pounds.

O'Fla. Five thousand pounds! Mercy upon me!—When there are such temptations in the law, can we wonder if some of the corps are a disgrace to it?

Var. Well, you have got the paper; if you are an honest man, give it to Charles Dudley. 409

O'Fla. An honest man! Look at me, friend, I am a soldier, this is not the livery of a knave; I am an Irishman, honey, mine is not the country of dishonour. Now, sirrah, be gone; if you enter these doors, or give Lady Rusport the least item of what has passed, I will cut off both your ears, and rob the pillory of its due.

Var. I wish I was fairly once out of his sight. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE X.

A Room in STOCKWELL'S House. Enter STOCKWELL.

Stock. I must disclose myself to Belcour; this noble instance of his generosity, which old Dudley has been relating, allies me to him at once: concealment becomes too painful; I shall be proud to own him for my son—But see, he's here. 421

BELCOUR enters, and throws himself upon a Sofa.

Bel. O my curst tropical constitution! Would to Heaven I had been dropt upon the snows of Lapland, and never felt the blessed influence of the sun, so I had never burnt with these inflammatory passions!

Stock. So, so! You seem disordered, Mr. Belcour!

Bel. Disorder'd, sir! Why did I ever quit the soil in which I grew? what evil planet drew me from that warm sunny region, where naked nature walks without disguise, into this cold, contriving, artificial country? 430

Stock. Come, sir, you've met a rascal—what of that? general conclusions are illiberal.

Bel. No, sir, I've met reflection by the way; I've come from folly, noise, and fury, and met a silent monitor—Well, well, a villain—'twas not to be pardoned—Pray, never mind me, sir.

Stock. Alas, my heart bleeds for him!

Bel. And yet I might have heard him: now plague upon that blundering Irishman for coming in as he did; the hurry of the deed might palliate the event: deliberate execution has less to plead—Mr. Stockwell, I am bad company to you.

Stock. Oh, sir, make no excuse. I think you have not found me forward to pry into the secrets of your pleasures and pursuits; 'tis not my disposition; but there are times, when want of curiosity would be want of friendship. 445

Bel. Ah, sir, mine is a case wherein you and I shall never think alike, the punctilious rules, by which I am bound, are not to be found in your ledgers, nor will pass current in the computing-house of a trader.

Stock. 'Tis very well, sir: if you think I can render you any service, it will be worth your trial to confide in me; if not, your secret is safer in your own bosom. 452

Bel. That sentiment demands my confidence: pray, sit down by me. You must know, I have an affair of honour upon my hands with young Dudley; and, though I put up with no man's insult, yet I wish to take away no man's life.

Stock. I know the young man, and am apprized of your generosity to his father: what can have bred a quarrel between you? 459

Bel. A foolish passion on my side, and a haughty provocation on his. There is a girl, Mr. Stockwell, whom I have unfortunately seen, of most uncommon beauty: she has withal an air of so much natural modesty, that had I not good assurance of her being an attainable wanton, I declare I should as soon have thought of attempting the chastity of Diana.

Enter Servant.

Stock. Hey-day, do you interrupt us?

Serv. Sir, there's an Irish gentleman will take no denial: he says he must see Mr. Belcour directly, upon business of the last consequence. 470

Bel. Admit him: 'tis the Irish officer that parted us, and brings me young Dudley's challenge: I should have made a long story of it, and he'll tell you in three words.

Enter O'FLAHERTY.

O'Fla. Save you, my dear: and you, sir! I have a little bit of a word in private for you.

Bel. Pray deliver your commands: this gentleman is my intimate friend.

O'Fla. Why, then, Ensign Dudley will be glad to measure swords with you, yonder, at the London Tavern, in Bishops-gate-street, at nine o'clock—you know the place. 480

Bel. I do; and shall observe the appointment.

O'Fla. Will you be of the party, sir? We shall want a fourth hand.

Stock. Savage as the custom is, I close with your proposal; and, though I am not fully informed of the occasion of your quarrel, I shall rely on Mr. Belcour's honour for the justice of it; and willingly stake my life in his defence.

O'Fla. Sir, you're a gentleman of honour, and I shall be

glad of being better known to you — But hark'e, Belcour, I had like to have forgot part of my errand: there is the money you gave old Dudley; you may tell it over, faith; 'tis a receipt in full: now the lad can put you to death with a safe conscience; and when he has done that job for you, let it be a warning how you attempt the sister of a man of honour.

495

Bel. The sister!

O'Fla. Ay, the sister; 'tis English, is it not? Or Irish; 'tis all one: you understand me, his sister, or Louisa Dudley, that's her name, I think, call her which you will: by St. Patrick, 'tis a foolish piece of a business, Belcour, to go about to take away a poor girl's virtue from her, when there are so many to be met in this town, who have disposed of theirs to your hands.

[*Exit.*

Stock. Why, I am thunderstruck. What is it you have done, and what is the shocking business in which I have engaged? if I understood him right, 'tis the sister of young Dudley you've been attempting: you talked to me of a profest wanton: the girl he speaks of has beauty enough indeed to inflame your desires, but she has honour, innocence, and simplicity, to awe the most licentious passion: if you have done that, Mr. Belcour, I renounce you, I abandon you, I forswear all fellowship or friendship with you for ever.

Bel. Have patience for a moment: we do indeed speak of the same person—but she is not innocent, she is not young Dudley's sister.

515

Stock. Astonishing! Who told you this?

Bel. The woman where she lodges; the person who put me on the pursuit, and contrived our meetings.

Stock. What woman? what person?

Bel. Fulmer her name is: I warrant you I did not proceed without good grounds.

Stock. Fulmer ! Fulmer !——Who waits ?

Enter a Servant.

Send Mr. Stukely hither directly. I begin to see my way into this dark transaction. Mr. Belcour, Mr. Belcour, you are no match for the cunning and contrivances of this intriguing town.

526

Enter STUKELY.

Pr'ythee, Stukely, what is the name of the woman and her husband, who were stopt upon suspicion of selling stolen diamonds at our next door neighbour's, the jeweller ?

Stukely. Fulmer.

Stock. So !

Bel. Can you procure me a sight of those diamonds ?

Stuke. They are now in my hand ; I was desired to shew them to Mr. Stockwell.

Stock. Give 'em to me : what do I see ? As I live, the very diamonds Miss Rusport sent hither, and which I intrusted to you to return,

Bel. Yes, but I betrayed that trust, and gave them to Mrs. Fulmer to present to Miss Dudley.

539

Stock. With a view, no doubt, to bribe her to compliance.

Bel. I own it.

Stock. For shame, for shame ; and 'twas this woman's intelligence you relied upon for Miss Dudley's character ?

Bel. I thought she knew her ; by Heaven, I would have died sooner than have insulted a woman of virtue, or a man of honour.

Stock. I think you would : but mark the danger of licentious courses : you are betrayed, robbed, abused, and, but for this providential discovery, in a fair way of being sent out of the world with all your follies on your head——Dear

Stukely, go to my neighbour, tell him I have an owner for the jewels, and beg him to carry the people under custody to the London Tavern, and wait for me there.—[Exit Stukely.]

—I fear the law does not provide a punishment to reach the villany of these people; but how, in the name of wonder, could you take any thing on the word of such an informer?

Bel. Because I had not lived long enough in your country to know how few informers' words are to be taken; persuaded however as I was of Miss Dudley's guilt, I must own to you I was staggered with the appearance of such innocence, especially when I saw her admitted into Miss Rusport's company. 562

Stock. Good Heaven! did you meet her at Miss Rusport's, and could you doubt her being a woman of reputation?

Bel. By you, perhaps, such a mistake could not have been made; but in a perfect stranger I hope it is venial. I did not know what artifices young Dudley might have used to conceal her character; I did not know what disgrace attended the detection of it. 569

Stock. I see it was a trap laid for you, which you have narrowly escaped; you addressed a woman of honour with all the loose incense of a profane admirer, and you have drawn upon you the resentment of a man of honour, who thinks himself bound to protect her.—Well, sir, you must atone for this mistake.

Bel. To the lady the most penitent submission I can make is justly due; but, in the execution of an act of justice, it shall never be said my soul was swayed by the least particle of fear: I have received a challenge from her brother: now, though I would give my fortune, almost my life itself to purchase her happiness, yet I cannot abate her one scruple of my honour; I have been branded with the name of villain.

Stock. Ay, sir, you mistook her character, and he mistook yours; error begets error. 584

Bel. Villain, Mr. Stockwell, is a harsh word.

Stock. It is a harsh word, and should be unsaid.

Bel. Come, come, it shall be unsaid.

Stock. Or else what follows? Why the sword is drawn, and to heal the wrongs you have done to the reputation of the sister, you make an honourable amends by murdering the brother. 591

Bel. Murdering!

Stock. 'Tis thus religion writes and speaks the word; in the vocabulary of modern honour there is no such term—But come, I don't despair of satisfying the one without alarming the other; that done, I have a discovery to unfold, that you will then, I hope, be fitted to receive. [Exeunt.

ACT V. SCENE I.

The London Tavern. Enter O'FLAHERTY, STOCKWELL, CHARLES, and BELCOUR.

O'Flaherty.

GENTLEMEN, well met! you understand each other's minds, and as I see you have brought nothing but your swords, you may set to without any further ceremony.

Stock. You will not find us backward in any worthy cause; but before we proceed any further, I would ask this young gentleman, whether he has any explanation to require of Mr. Belcour.

Charles. Of Mr. Belcour none; his actions speak for themselves: but to you, sir, I would fain propose one question.

Stock. Name it. 10

Charles. How is it, Mr. Stockwell, that I meet a man of your character on this ground?

Stock. I will answer you directly, and my answer shall not displease you. I come hither in defence of the reputation

of Miss Dudley, to redress the injuries of an innocent young lady.

O'Fla. By my soul the man knows he's to fight, only he mistakes which side he's to be of.

Stock. You are about to draw your sword to refute a charge against your sister's honour; you would do well, if there were no better means within reach; but the proofs of her innocence are lodg'd within our bosoms, and if we fall, you destroy the evidence that most effectually can clear her fame.

Charles. How's that, sir?

24

Stock. This gentleman could best explain it to you; but you have given him an undeserved name that seals his lips against you: I am not under the same inhibition, and if your anger can keep cool for a few minutes, I desire I may call in two witnesses, who will solve all difficulties at once. Here, waiter! bring those people in that are without.

O'Fla. Out upon it, what need is there for so much talking about the matter; can't you settle your differences first, and dispute about 'em afterwards.

33

FULMER and Mrs. FULMER brought in.

Charles. Fulmer and his wife in custody?

Stock. Yes, sir; these are your honest landlord and landlady, now in custody for defrauding this gentleman of certain diamonds intended to have been presented to your sister. Be so good, Mrs. Fulmer, to inform the company why you so grossly scandaliz'd the reputation of an innocent lady, by persuading Mr. Belcour that Miss Dudley was not the sister, but the mistress of this gentleman.

Mrs. Ful. Sir, I don't know what right you have to question me, and I shall not answer till I see occasion.

43

Stock. Had you been as silent heretofore, madam, it would have saved you some trouble; but we don't want your con-

fession. This letter, which you wrote to Mr. Belcour, will explain your design; and these diamonds, which of right belong to Miss Rusport, will confirm your guilt: the law, Mrs. Fulmer, will make you speak, though I cann't. Constable, take charge of your prisoners. 50

Ful. Hold a moment. Mr. Stockwell, you are a gentleman that knows the world, and a member of parliament; we shall not attempt to impose upon you; we know we are open to the law, and we know the utmost it can do against us. Mr. Belcour has been ill used to be sure, and so has Miss Dudley; and, for my own part, I always condemn'd the plot as a very foolish plot, but it was a child of Mrs. Fulmer's brain, and she would not be put out of conceit with it. 59

Mrs Ful. You are a very foolish man, Mr. Fulmer, so pr'ythee hold your tongue.

Ful. Therefore, as I was saying, if you send her to Bridewell, it won't be amiss; and if you give her a little wholesome discipline, she may be the better for that too: but for me, Mr. Stockwell, who am a man of letters, I must beseech you, sir, not to bring any disgrace upon my profession.

Stock. 'Tis you, Mr. Fulmer, not I, that disgrace your profession; therefore begone, nor expect that I will betray the interests of mankind so far as to shew favour to such incendiaries. Take 'em away; I blush to think such wretches should have the power to set two honest men at variance. 71

[*Exeunt Fulmer, &c.*]

Charles. Mr. Belcour, we have mistaken each other; let us exchange forgiveness. I am convinced you intended no affront to my sister, and ask your pardon for the expression I was betrayed into.

Bel. 'Tis enough, sir; the error began on my side, and was Miss Dudley here, I would be the first to atone.

Stock. Let us all adjourn to my house, and conclude the evening like friends: you will find a little entertainment ready for you; and, if I am not mistaken, Miss Dudley and her father will make part of our company. Come, major, do you consent? 82

O'Fla. Most readily, Mr. Stockwell; a quarrel well made up, is better than a victory hardly earned. Give me your hand, Belcour; o' my conscience you are too honest for the country you live in. And now, my dear lad, since peace is concluded on all sides, I have a discovery to make to you, which you must find out for yourself, for deuce take me if I rightly comprehend it, only that your aunt Rusport is in a conspiracy against you, and a vile rogue of a lawyer, whose name I forget, at the bottom of it. 91

Charles. What conspiracy? Dear major, recollect yourself.

O'Fla. By my soul, I've no faculty at recollecting myself; but I've a paper somewhere about me, that will tell you more of the matter than I can. When I get to the merchant's, I will endeavour to find it.

Charles. Well, it must be in your own way; but I confess you have thoroughly roused my curiosity. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

STOCKWELL'S House. Enter Captain DUDLEY, LOUISA, and STUKELY.

Dud. And are those wretches, Fulmer and his wife, in safe custody. 101

Stuke. They are in good hands. I accompanied them to the tavern, where your son was to be, and then went in search of you. You may be sure Mr. Stockwell will enforce the law against them as far as it will go.

Dud. What mischief might their cursed machinations have produced, but for this timely discovery !

Lou. Still I am terrified ; I tremble with apprehension lest Mr. Belcour's impetuosity and Charles's spirit should not wait for an explanation, but drive them both to extremes, before the mistake can be unravell'd. 111

Stuke. Mr. Stockwell is with them, madam, and you have nothing to fear ; you cannot suppose he would ask you hither for any other purpose but to celebrate their reconciliation, and to receive Mr. Belcour's atonement.

Dud. No, no, Louisa, Mr. Stockwell's honour and discretion guard us against all danger or offence ; he well knows we will endure no imputation on the honour of our family, and he certainly has invited us to receive satisfaction on that score in an amicable way. 120

Lou. Would to Heaven they were return'd !

Stuke. You may expect them every minute ; and see, madam, agreeable to your wish, they are here. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

Enter CHARLES, and afterwards STOCKWELL and O'FLAHERTY.

Lou. O, Charles, O, brother ! how could you serve me so, how could you tell me you was going to Lady Rusport's, and then set out with a design of fighting Mr. Belcour ? But where is he ? Where is your antagonist ?

Stock. Captain, I am proud to see you ; and you, Miss Dudley, do me particular honour. We have been adjusting, sir, a very extraordinary and dangerous mistake, which I take for granted my friend Stukely has explained to you.

Dud. He has : I have too good an opinion of Mr. Belcour to believe he could be guilty of a design'd affront to an in

nocent girl, and I am much too well acquainted with your character to suppose you could abet him in such a design; I have no doubt, therefore, all things will be set to rights in very few words, when we have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Belcour. 138

Stock. He has only step'd into the counting-house, and will wait upon you directly. You will not be over strict, madam, in weighing Mr. Belcour's conduct to the minutest scruple; his manners, passions, and opinions, are not as yet assimilated to this climate; he comes amongst you a new character, an inhabitant of a new world, and both hospitality, as well as pity, recommend him to our indulgence.

SCENE IV.

Enter BELCOUR, who bows to Miss DUDLEY.

Bel. I am happy and ashamed to see you; no man in his senses would offend you; I forfeited mine, and err'd against the light of the sun, when I overlook'd your virtues; but your beauty was predominant, and hid them from my sight; I now perceive I was the dupe of a most improbable report, and humbly entreat your pardon. 151

Lou. Think no more of it; 'twas a mistake.

Bel. My life has been compos'd of little else; 'twas founded in mystery, and has continued in error: I was once given to hope, Mr. Stockwell, that you was to have deliver'd me from these difficulties; but either I do not deserve your confidence, or I was deceiv'd in my expectations.

Stock. When this lady has confirm'd your pardon, I shall hold you deserving of my confidence.

Lou. That was granted the moment it was ask'd. 160

Bel. To prove my title to his confidence, honour me so

far with yours, as to allow me a few minutes conversation in private with you. [*She turns to her father.*]

Dud. By all means, Louisa. Come, Mr. Stockwell, let us go into another room.

Charles. And now, Major O'Flaherty, I claim your promise of a sight of the paper, that is to unravel the conspiracy of my aunt Rusport's : I think I have waited with great patience. 169

O'Fla. I have been endeavouring to call to mind what it was I overheard : I've got the paper, and will give you the best account I can of the whole transaction. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

Enter BELCOUR and LOUISA.

Bel. Miss Dudley, I have solicited this audience, to repeat to you my penitence and confusion. How shall I atone ?— What reparation can I make to you and virtue ? 175

Lou. To me there's nothing due, nor any thing demanded of you but your more favourable opinion for the future, if you should chance to think of me. Upon the part of virtue I'm not empower'd to speak ; but if hereafter, as you range through life, you should surprise her in the person of some wretched female, poor as myself, and not so well protected, enforce not your advantage, complete not your licentious triumph, but raise her, rescue her from shame and sorrow, and reconcile her to herself again. 184

Bel. I will, I will : by having your idea ever present in my thoughts, virtue shall keep an advocate within me. But tell me, loveliest, when you pardon the offence, can you, all perfect as you are, approve of the offender ? As I now cease to view you in that false light I lately did, can you,

and in the fulness of your bounty will you, cease also to reflect upon the libertine addresses I have paid you, and look upon me as your reformed, your rational admirer? 192

Lou. Are sudden reformations apt to last? and how can I be sure the first fair face you meet will not ensnare affections so unsteady, and that I shall not lose you lightly as I gained you?

Bel. Because, though you conquered me by surprise, I have no inclination to rebel; because, since the first moment that I saw you, every instant has improved you in my eyes; because by principle as well as passion I am unalterably yours: in short, there are ten thousand causes for my love to you—Would to Heaven I could plant one in your soft bosom, that might move you to return it! 203

Lou. Nay, Mr. Belcour—

Bel. I know I am not worthy your regard; I know I'm tainted with a thousand faults, sick of a thousand follies; but there's a healing virtue in your eyes that makes recovery certain; I cannot be a villain in your arms.

Lou. That you can never be: whoever you shall honour with your choice, my life upon't that woman will be happy: it is not from suspicion that I hesitate, it is from honour: 'tis the severity of my condition, it is the world, that never will interpret fairly in our case. 213

Bel. Oh, what am I? and who in this wide world concerns himself for such a nameless, such a friendless thing as I am? I see, Miss Dudley, I've not yet obtained your pardon.

Lou. Nay, that you are in full possession of.

Bel. Oh, seal it with your hand then, loveliest of women, confirm it with your heart; make me honourably happy, and crown your penitent, not with your pardon only, but your love. 221

Lou. My love!—

Bel. By Heaven, my soul is conquered with your virtues more than my eyes are ravished with your beauty. Oh, may this soft, this sensitive alarm be happy, be auspicious! Doubt not, deliberate not, delay not. If happiness be the end of life, why do we slip a moment?

SCENE VI.

Enter O'FLAHERTY, and afterwards DUDLEY and CHARLES with STOCKWELL.

O'Fla. Joy, joy, joy! Sing, dance, leap, laugh for joy! Ha' done making love, and fall down on your knees to every saint in the calendar; for they're all on your side, and honest St. Patrick at the head of them. 231

Charles. O Louisa, such an event! By the luckiest chance in life we have discovered a will of my grandfather's made in his last illness, by which he cuts off my aunt Rusport with a small annuity, and leaves me heir to his whole estate, with a fortune of fifteen thousand pounds to yourself.

Lou. What is it you tell me? O, sir, instruct me to support this unexpected turn of fortune. [*To her Father.*

Dud. Name not fortune; 'tis the work of Providence—'tis the justice of Heaven, that would not suffer innocence to be oppressed, nor your base aunt to prosper in her cruelty and cunning. [*A Servant whispers Belcour, and he goes out.*

O'Fla. You shall pardon me, Captain Dudley, but you must not overlook St. Patrick neither; for, by my soul, if he had not put it into my head to slip behind the screen when your righteous aunt and the lawyer were plotting together, I don't see how you would ever have come at the paper there, that Master Stockwell is reading. 248

Dud. True, my good friend, you are the father of this dis-

covery; but how did you contrive to get this will from the lawyer? 251

O'Fla. By force, my dear—the only way of getting any thing from a lawyer's clutches.

Stock. Well, major, when he brings his action of assault and battery against you, the least Dudley can do is, to defend you with the weapons you have put into his hands.

Charles. That I am bound to do; and after the happiness I shall have in sheltering a father's age from the vicissitudes of life, my next delight will be in offering you an asylum in the bosom of your country. 260

O'Fla. And upon my soul, my dear, 'tis high time I was there; for tis now thirty long years since I sat foot in my native country—and by the power of St. Patrick I swear I think it's worth all the rest of the world put together.

Dud. Ay, major, much about that time have I been beating the round of service, and 'twere well for us both to give over: we have stood many a tough gale, and abundance of hard blows; but Charles shall lay us up in a little private, but safe harbour, where we'll rest from our labours, and peacefully wind up the remainder of our days. 270

O'Fla. Agreed; and you may take it as a proof of my esteem, young man, that Major O'Flaherty accepts a favour at your hands—for by Heaven I'd sooner starve, than say, 'I thank you,' to the man I despise. But I believe you are an honest lad; and I'm glad you've trounced the old cat—for on my conscience I believe I must otherwise have married her myself, to have let you in for a share of her fortune.

Stock. Hey-day, what's become of Belcour?

Lou. One of your servants called him out just now, and seemingly on some earnest occasion. 280

Stock. I hope, Miss Dudley, he has atoned to you as a gentleman ought.

Lou. Mr. Belcour, sir, will always do what a gentleman ought—and in my case I fear only you will think he has done too much.

Stock. What has he done; and what can be too much? Pray Heaven it may be as I wish! [Aside.

Dud. Let us hear it, child.

Lou. With confusion for my own unworthiness, I confess to you he has offered me—— 290

Stock. Himself.

Lou. 'Tis true.

Stock. Then I am happy: all my doubts, my cares are over, and I may own him for my son.——Why these are joyful tidings: come, my good friend, assist me in disposing your lovely daughter to accept this returning prodigal; he is no unprincipled, no hardened libertine; his love for you and virtue is the same.

Dud. 'Twere vile ingratitude in me to doubt his merit— What says my child? 300

O'Fla. Begging your pardon now, 'tis a frivolous sort of a question, that of yours; for you may see plainly enough by the young lady's looks, that she says a great deal, though she speaks never a word.

Charles. Well, sister, I believe the major has fairly interpreted the state of your heart.

Lou. I own it; and what must that heart be, which love, honour, and beneficence like Mr. Belcour's can make no impression on?

Stock. I thank you. What happiness has this hour brought to pass.

O'Fla. Why don't we all sit down to supper, then, and make a night on't? 313

Stock. Hold, here comes Belcour.

SCENE VII.

BELCOUR introducing Miss RUSPORT.

Bel. Mr. Dudley, here is a fair refugee, who properly comes under your protection: she is equipt for Scotland; but your good fortune, which I have related to her, seems inclined to save you both the journey——Nay, madam, never go back; you are amongst friends.

Charles. Charlotte! 320

Char. The same; that fond officious girl, that haunts you every where; that persecuting spirit——

Charles. Say rather, that protecting angel; such you have been to me.

Char. O Charles, you have an honest, but proud heart.

Charles. Nay, chide me not, dear Charlotte.

Bel. Seal up her lips then: she is an adorable girl; her arms are open to you; and love and happiness are ready to receive you. 329

Charles. Thus then I claim my dear, my destin'd wife.
[Embracing her.]

SCENE VIII.

Enter Lady RUSPORT.

L. Rus. Hey-day! mighty fine! wife truly! mighty well! kissing, embracing—did ever any thing equal this?—Why, you shameless hussy!—But I won't condescend to waste a word upon you.——You, sir, you, Mr. Stockwell, you fine, sanctified, fair-dealing man of conscience, is this the principle you trade upon! Is this your neighbourly system, to keep a

house of reception for run-away daughters, and young beggarly fortune-hunters?

O'Fla. Be advised now, and don't put yourself in such a passion: we were all very happy till you came.

L. Rus. Stand away, sir; hav'n't I a reason to be in a passion?

341

O'Fla. Indeed, honey, and you have, if you knew all.

L. Rus. Come, madam, I have found out your haunts; dispose yourself to return home with me. Young man, let me never see you within my doors again. Mr. Stockwell, I shall report your behaviour, depend on it.

Stock. Hold, madam; I cannot consent to lose Miss Rusport's company this evening, and I am persuaded you won't insist upon it: 'tis an unmotherly action to interrupt your daughter's happiness in this manner, believe me it is. 350

L. Rus. Her happiness, truly; upon my word! and I suppose it's an unmotherly action to interrupt her ruin; for what but ruin must it be to marry a beggar?—I think my sister had a proof of that, sir, when she made choice of you.

[To Captain Dudley.]

Dud. Don't be too lavish of your spirits, Lady Rusport.

O'Fla. By my soul you'll have occasion for a sip of the cordial Elixir, by and by.

Stock. It don't appear to me, madam, that Mr. Dudley can be called a beggar. 359

L. Rus. But it appears to me, Mr. Stockwell—I am apt to think a pair of colours cannot furnish settlement quite sufficient for the heiress of Sir Stephen Rusport.

Char. But a good estate in aid of a commission may do something.

L. Rus. A good estate, truly! where should he get a good estate, pray?

Stock. Why suppose now a worthy old gentleman, on his death-bed, should have taken it in mind to leave him one—

L. Rus. Ha ! what's that you say ?

O' Fla. O ho ! you begin to smell a plot, do you ? 370

Stock. Suppose there should be a paper in the world that runs thus—' I do hereby give and bequeath all my estates, real and personal, to Charles Dudley, son of my late daughter Louisa,' &c. &c. &c.

L. Rus. Why I am thunderstruck !—By what contrivance, what villany did you get possession of that paper ?

Stock. There was no villany, madam, in getting possession of it : the crime was in concealing it, none in bringing it to light.

L. Rus. O, that cursed lawyer, Varland ! 380

O' Fla. You may say that, faith, he is a cursed lawyer, and a cursed piece of work I had to get the paper from him. Your ladyship now was to have paid him five thousand pounds for it—I forced him to give it me of his own accord, for nothing at all, at all.

L. Rus. Is it you that have done this ? Am I foiled by your blundering contrivances after all.

O' Fla. 'Twas a blunder, faith, but as natural a one as if I had made it o' purpose.

Charles. Come, let us not oppress the fallen : do right even now, and you shall have no cause to complain. 391

L. Rus. Am I become an object of your pity, then ?—Insufferable !—Confusion light amongst you !—Marry and be wretched : let me never see you more. [Exit.

Char. She is outrageous ; I suffer for her, and blush to see her thus exposed.

Charles. Come, Charlotte, don't let this angry woman disturb our happiness : we will save her in spite of herself : your father's memory shall not be stained by the discredit of his second choice. 400

Char. I trust implicitly to your discretion, and am in all things yours.

Bel. Now, lovely but obdurate, does not this example soften?

Lou. What can you ask for more? Accept my hand, accept my willing heart.

Bel. O bliss unutterable! Brother, father, friend, and you, the author of this general joy—— 408

O'Fla. Blessing of St. Patrick upon us all! 'Tis a night of wonderful and surprising ups and downs: I wish we were all fairly set down to supper, and there was an end on't.

Stock. Hold for a moment! I have yet one word to interpose——Intitled by my friendship to a voice in your disposal, I have approved your match: there yet remains a father's consent to be obtained.

Bel. Have I a father?

Stock. You have a father. Did not I tell you I had a discovery to make? Compose yourself: you have a father, who observes, who knows, who loves you. 419

Bel. Keep me no longer in suspense: my heart is softened for the affecting discovery, and nature fits me to receive his blessing.

Stock. I am your father.

Bel. My father! Do I live?

Stock. I am your father.

Bel. It is too much; my happiness o'erpowers me: to gain a friend and find a father is too much: I blush to think how little I deserve you. [They embrace.

Dud. See, children, how many new relations spring from this night's unforeseen events, to endear us to each other.

O'Fla. O' my conscience I think we shall be all related by and by. 432

Stock. How happily has this evening concluded, and yet how threatening was its approach! Let us repair to the supper-room, where I will unfold to you every circumstance of my mysterious story. Yes, Belcour, I have watched you

with a patient but enquiring eye, and I have discovered, through the veil of some irregularities, a heart beaming with benevolence, an animated nature, fallible, indeed, but not incorrigible; and your election of this excellent young lady makes me glory in acknowledging you to be my son. 441

Bel. I thank you—and in my turn glory in the father I have gained: sensibly imprest with gratitude for such extraordinary dispensations, I beseech you, amiable Louisa, for the time to come, whenever you perceive me deviating into error or offence, bring only to my mind the Providence of this night, and I will turn to reason, and obey.

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

SPOKEN BY MRS. ABINGTON.

The Lines in Italics are to be spoken in a catechise Tone.

CONFESS, good folks, has not Miss Rusport shewn
Strange whims for SEVENTEEN HUNDRED SEVENTY-ONE?
What, pawn her jewels—There's a precious plan!—
To extricate from want a brave *old* man;
And fall in love with poverty and honour—
A girl of fortune, fashion—Fie upon her.
But do not think we females of the stage,
So dead to the refinements of the age,
That we agree with our old-fashion'd poet:
I am point blank against him, and I'll shew it:
And that my tongue may more politely run,
Make me a lady—Lady Blabington.
Now, with a rank and title to be free,
I'll make a catechism—and you shall see
What is the *veritable beaume de vie*:
As I change place, I stand for that, or this—
My lady questions first—then answers Miss.

[*She speaks as my lady.*]

'Come, tell me, child, what were our modes and dress,
'In those strange times of that old fright, Queen Bess?'

And now for Miss—

[*She changes place, and speaks for Miss.*]

—When Bess was England's queen,
Ladies were dismal beings, seldom seen;
They rose betimes, and breakfasted as soon
On beef and beer—then studied Greek till noon:
Unpainted cheeks with blush of health did glow,
Beruff'd and fardingal'd from top to toe,
Nor necks, nor ancles, would they ever shew.

Learnt Greek!—[*Laughs.*—Our outside head takes half a day;

Have we much time to dress the *inside*, pray?
No heads dress'd à-la-Greque the ancients quote,
There may be learning in a *papillote*:
Cards are *our* classics; and I, Lady B,
In learning will not yield to any she
Of the late founded *female* university.
But now for Lady Blab——

[*Speaks as my Lady.*]

‘Tell me, Miss Nancy,
‘What sports and what employments did they fancy?’—

[*Speaks as Miss.*]

The vulgar creatures seldom left their houses,
But taught their children, work'd, and lov'd their spouses;
The use of cards at Christmas only knew,
They play'd for little, and their games were few,
One-and-thirty, Put, All-fours, and Lantera-loo.
They bore a race of mortals stout and boney,
And never heard the name of Macaroni.

[*Speaks as my Lady.*]

- ‘ Oh, brava, brava! that’s my pretty dear!
- ‘ Now let a modern, modish fair appear;
- ‘ No more of these old dowdy maids and wives,
- ‘ Tell how superior beings pass their lives.’

[*Speaks as Miss.*]

*Till noon they sleep, from noon till night they dress,
From night till morn they game it more or less;
Next night the same sweet course of joy run o’er,
Then the night after as the night before,
And the night after that, encore, encore!—*

[*She comes forward.*]

Thus with our cards we *shuffle* off all sorrow,
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow!
We *deal* *apace*, from youth unto our prime,
To the last moment of our tabby time;
And all our yesterdays, from rout and drum,
Have lighted fools with empty pockets home.
Thus do our lives with rapture *soll* away,
Not with the nonsense of our author’s play;
This is true life—true spirit—give it praise;
Don’t snarl and sigh for good Queen Bess’s days.
For all you look so *sour*, and bend the brow,
You all rejoice with me you’re living now.

7 П 52

Act IV

KING CHARLES I.st

Scene II.



De Wilde pinx.

Audley sculp.

M. KEMBLE as KING CHARLES.

King ———— "By what law
have you erected this pretended Court?"

London. Printed for J. Ball, Brickth. Library. Street. 3. April. 1873.



Barney pinx.

Lacey sculp.

London. Printed for J. Edl. British Library. Strand. April 3. 1793.

7 JU 52

KING CHARLES I.

A
TRAGEDY.

BY MR. WILLIAM HAVARD.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas are omitted in the Representation.

LONDON,

*Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of JOHN BELL,
British-Library, STRAND,
Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.*

M DCC XCIII.



TO HER GRACE THE
DUTCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

MADAM,

ADDRESSES, unauthorised by merit, are too frequent, and (what should be more surprising) often successful.

I would willingly approach in what I think the best shape, and choose rather to appear dressed in the opinion of the town, than my own.

I have been favoured with the general approbation, yet am still conscious of weakness, and know not where to sue more properly for protection, than to your Grace; believe this, madam, when I assure you, that I will always sacrifice my interest—to my sincerity.

I am an enemy to flattery; and, therefore, to be sure to be thoroughly disengaged from it, apply to a person who wants it not.

The greatness of mind I have constantly considered beyond that of the person; and when I say that you are a good woman, I think I say more than I should by styling you a great dutchess. By confirming yourself the first, you have eminently proved yourself the latter. In this last opinion I apply myself to the world—not to your Grace, conscious that you are the only person that will not join in it.

I have little title to address your Grace, more than in the assurance that the smallest merit does not go unregarded by you. I confess myself obscure; but shall not think so, if your Grace looks upon me with the eye of favour: for, believe me, I have more ambition to merit your Grace's esteem, than any other consideration that may be suggested; and shall ever think myself honoured in subscribing myself

Your Grace's most devoted,

Most obedient,

And most humble servant,

W. HAVARD.

PREFACE.

To obviate any criticism that may justly fall upon the inaccuracy of this play, I judged it necessary to publish a few lines as an apology for the liberties I have taken with the history, and the faults that may appear to the judicious reader. And though the uncommon and general applause it has met with in the representation may seem to make it unnecessary, yet, without it, I could not acquit myself to my own judgment.

And first, as to the liberties I have taken with history, I hope I may be forgiven my introducing the queen, who was in France at the time I have laid the action of the play; but it being a story barren of female characters, I was induced to make her appear; and because I thought there would very naturally arise a pleasing distress at their parting, which I have introduced at the beginning of the fourth act.

Again to heighten the distress in the last act, and to bring on one supposed to receive and convey the advice better, that the king sends by him to his eldest son, Charles, James appears, who at that juncture was in Holland. I have made an excuse for Cromwell's coming to the king, because I thought an interview between them was necessary, and would add to the spirit of the whole.

I am not conscious of any other liberties I have taken, except heightening the characters of Fairfax and his lady; which has added a warmth to the piece, and in some measure supplied the want of real matter to constitute five acts. The other persons in the drama are as strongly characterised, and as impartially, as I had ability, and the shortness of the time would permit.

There were some speeches omitted in the representation, which I have restored in print; and the reader may particularize them, if he thinks it worth while, by remarking commas prefixed to each line.

I must now do myself the pleasure to address those gentlemen of known judgment and great candour, whose corrections (though in so short a time for making them) have done me honour, and given reputation to the piece. Some I have not an opportunity of thanking personally; and therefore do it thus publicly, and declare, that nothing could equal the justness of their remarks, but their sincerity and humanity in delivering them.

I now throw the piece before the reader; and hope it will prove as agreeable an entertainment in the closet, as it seemed to be upon the stage.

KING CHARLES I.

THIS play is written by WILLIAM HAVARD, an actor for some years under GARRICK, and for whose final benefit that great man himself performed at Drury-lane Theatre.

His play is not written with an aim after the soaring sublimities of our early Drama, neither of course does it fall upon the turgid trash with which its imitators have generally satisfied corrupted taste. It is simply affecting, and placidly eloquent: the story does not lose its interest by the dress of the tragedian. Why it ceases to be a stock play, we know not; for though Lord CHESTERFIELD professed himself of opinion that its catastrophe was *too horrible*, they who remember certain predictions and maxims of this conceited writer, may not incline to believe *that* the only reason he could have assigned.

Why a lesson like this play should not be perpetually presented to Englishmen, it is hard to say. The depravities of its rebels might warn them of the congenial hypocrisy of our own innovators—and we should be steeled against the wiles and impositions of modern regicides.

The writer of this preface has unhappily lived during an act similar in its mode, superior in its horrors, to that which this tragedy commemorates:—compared with the murder of CHARLES, that of LOUIS XVI. sinks into a savage assassination. That there was any difference between them may be ascribed to the religious habits of the Cromwell faction, and the utter prophanity of the modern republicans. The present ruffians, feeling the alliance between church and king, in France have destroyed both. We must blush to have given them the example of regal slaughter; but while we do blush for our predecessors, we can say, that they were *deluded* rather than *depraved*; and that, the excess of fanaticism moderated, there was a stamen of reasonable religion and steady understanding upon which to found a people affectionately loyal, yet proudly free.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.

IN former times, when wit was no offence,
And men submitted to be pleas'd with sense—
Then was the stage fair virtue's fav'rite school,
Scourge of the knave, and mirror of the fool.
Here oft the villain's conscious blush would rise,
And fools become, by viewing folly, wise.
Our bard, as then, despises song and dance,
The notes of Italy, and jigs of France :
With home distress he nobly hopes to move,
And fire each bosom with its country's love —
So much a Briton — that he scorns to roam
To foreign climes, to fetch his hero home —
Conscious that in these scenes is clearly shown
Britain can boast true heroes of her own.
Murder avow'd by law he boldly paints,
Heroes and patriots, hypocrites and saints ;
Rebellion fighting for the public good,
And treason smiling in a monarch's blood.
Party, be dumb — in each pathetic scene,
Our muse to-night asserts an honest mean ;
Shows you a prince triumphant o'er his fate,
Glorious in death, as in misfortunes great ;
By nature virtuous, tho' misled by slaves,
By tools of power, by sycophants and knaves.
When Charles submits to faction's deadly blow,
What loyal heart but shares the monarch's woe ?
Nor less Maria's grief, ye gentle fair,
Claims the sad tribute of a tender tear : —
From British scenes to-night we hope applause,
And Britons sure will aid a British cause.

11

Dramatis Personæ.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

King CHARLES	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Wrighten.
Duke of YORK	-	-	-	-	-	_____
Duke of GLOUCESTER	-	-	-	-	-	_____
Bishop JUXON	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Hull.
Duke of RICHMOND	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Davies.
Marquis of LINDSEY	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Thompson.
OLIVER CROMWELL	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
FAIRFAX	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Lewis.
BRADSHAW	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. L'Estrange.
IRETON	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Peile.
Colonel TOMLINSON	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. J. Wilson.

Women.

QUEEN	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Inchbald.
Princess ELIZABETH	-	-	-	-	-	_____
Lady FAIRFAX	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Lewis.

SCENE, partly at *St. James's*, and partly at *Whitehall*.



KING CHARLES I.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Bishop Juxon and Duke of Richmond.

Juxon.

Good day, my lord, if, in a time like this,
Aught that is fortunate or good can happen;
When desolation, wedded to despair,
Strides o'er the land, and marks her way with ruin:
Plenty is fled with justice; rage and rapine
Have robb'd the widow'd matron, England, quite,
And left her now no dowry—but her tears.

Rich. Is it then certain that the lawless commons
Have form'd a court of justice (so they call it)
To bring the king to trial?

10

Juxon. 'T is most true;
And tho' the lords refuse to join the bill,
Yet they proceed without them. Lawless man!
Whither, at last, will thy impieties,
Thy daring insolence extend, when kings
Feel from a subject-hand the scourge of power?
Where may an injur'd monarch hope for safety,
If he not find it in his people's hearts?

Rich. Oh, Naseby, Naseby, what a deadly stroke
Was thy ill-fated field to royalty!

20

On thy success depended monarchy ;
The fate of rebels and the fate of kings
Hung on thy battle ; but thou, faithless too,
Conspir'd with faction to o'erthrow us all,
And bring to sight these more than bloody times.

Juxon. To-morrow does the black tribunal sit ;
When majesty is cited to appear
Before his tyrant subjects. Oh, preposterous !
Is't not as bad as if these rebel hands
Should from their seats tear forth their ruling eyes, 30
Whose watch directs the body's use and safety ?

Rich. It cannot be ! 'tis not in cruelty
To think of spilling royal blood. Mercy, sure,
And the pretended justice of their cause,
Will save them from the weight of so much guilt.

Juxon. What added guilt can that black bosom feel,
That has shook off allegiance to its king ?
Whole seas of common and of noble blood
Will not suffice ; the banquet must be crown'd,
And the brain heated with the blood of kings. 40
But see where Cromwell comes ! upon his brow
Dissimulation stamp'd. If I can judge
By lineament and feature, that man's heart
Can both contrive and execute the worst
And the most daring actions yet conceiv'd.
Ambitious, bloody, resolute and wise,
He ne'er betrays his meaning till he acts,
And ne'er looks out but with the eye of purpose.
His head so cool, that it appears the top
Of Alpine hill, clad with slow-wasting snow ; 50
His execution rapid as the force
Of falling waters thund'ring down its base.
Let us avoid him ; for my conscious soul
Fears him in wonder, and in praise condemns him. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter CROMWELL.

Crom. Now thro' the maze of gloomy policy
Has fire-eyed faction work'd her way to light,
And deck'd ambition in the robe of power.
Our fears in Charles's safety are remov'd,
And but one blow remains to fix our state—
The lopping off his head. No more the royal tree 60
Shall, from legitimacy's root, presume
To sprout forth tyrant branches. Commonwealths
Own no hereditary right, unless our worth
Shine equal to our birth. Wherefore, at once,
Down with nobility—the commons rule!
Avaunt prerogative and lineal title,
And be the right superior merit.

Enter FAIRFAX.

Fair. I was to seek you, sir; some lab'ring doubts,
Which, in th' uncertainty of these strange times,
Call for the ray of clearness, make me press 70
(Perhaps unseasonably) to your ear.
You will forgive th' impatience of a man
Who labours to be right—by your example.

Crom. Good Fairfax, spare me; I am ill at words,
And utter badly where I mean respect:
Uncouth my answers are to truth and plainness;
But to a compliment I ne'er could speak:
Yet could you look into my secret mind,
There my soul speaks to Fairfax, as to one
Book'd in the fairest page of my esteem, 80
And written on my heart—But to your doubts.

Fair. You may remember, sir, when first my sword,
My fortune, life, and still yet more—my honour,
Were all engag'd to fight the cause of justice;

You thought, with me, the wrongs to be redress'd
 Were the attempts upon the subjects' right,
 The unregarded laws, and bold design
 To stretch prerogative to boundless rule.
 Design full fair and noble! and th' event
 Has crown'd our utmost wishes. England owns 90
 No arbitrary sway: the king's adherents
 Are all dispers'd—or the remains so few,
 They are not worth a fear; the king himself
 In close confinement. Now, let reason judge,
 And blend discretion with success.
 Let us be just—but let us stop at justice,
 Nor by too hasty zeal o'ershoot the mark,
 The Roman spirits, savage as they were,
 When they determin'd to abolish kings,
 Shed not the blood of Tarquin, but expell'd him; 100
 And shall we, owners of the christian law,
 Where mercy shines the foremost attribute,
 Be harder to appease? If not more mild,
 Let us not be more cruel than barbarians.
 Charles grasp'd, we own, at arbitrary sway,
 And would have been a tyrant—for which crime,
 The kingdoms he was born to we have seiz'd.
 But let us not despoil him of his life.
 Crowns, as the gift of men, men may resume;
 But life, the gift of Heaven, let Heaven dispose of. 110
Crom. We'll have you weigh'd each growing circumstance,
 And held discretion in the nicest scale.
 Our fears remov'd, the subject right restor'd,
 What have we more to do, than to sit down,
 And each enjoy the vineyard of his toil?
 'Tis true—but yet some clamours are abroad;
 Petitions daily crowd the parliament,

That loudly call for justice on the king,
 Imputing to his charge the guilt of murders,
 The desolation that has bared the land, 120
 And swept the crops of plenty from our fields.

Fair. What, shall the rabble judge—those servile curs,
 Who, as they eat in plenty, snarl sedition?
 Are these to be regarded?

Crom. You mistake me.
 'Tis not their outcries only; but, indeed,
 Those who see farther, and with better judgment,
 Fear, while he lives, his friends will never die;
 But by some foreign force or home design,
 May some time shake the safety of the state. 130
 Besides, they speak of an approv'd good maxim,
 Remove the cause, and the effect will cease.
 Oh, worthy Fairfax, thou art wise and valiant!
 I have seen thee watch occasion till advantage
 Came smiling to thy arms, and crown'd thy patience:
 And then, in fight, I have beheld thy sword
 Outfly the pace of pestilential air,
 And kill in multitudes.

Fair. Good sir, forbear.

Crom. Blush not to hear a truth, when Cromwell speaks it.
 My uncouth manner, ill at varnishing,
 Beggars my will, and dresses praise uncomely.
 Methinks I see thee in the rage of battle,
 When Naseby's field confess'd thy victor arm,
 And thy decision was the fate of kings.
 Methinks I view thee in the bustling ranks,
 Where danger was the nearest—(for you brought it)
 Unhelm'd, encounter armies, and despise
 The safety that the meanest soldier wore;
 And when a private man, with bold assertion, 150

Challeng'd a conquest which your arm had gain'd,
And was reprov'd; methinks I hear you say,
I have enough of glory, let him own it.

Fair. Whither does all this tend? I pray forbear—
I never fought in hopes to have it told:
The man whose actions speak, expects no answer.

Crom. I do but barely tell thee what thou art,
And what the world may yet expect of Fairfax.
The diamond, merit, in the quarry hid,
Being unknown, unseen, attracts no eyes, 160
But digg'd up by the lab'rer's curiosity,
And polish'd by the hand of gratitude,
It shines the ornament of human life.—
Think therefore what you are, and what this juncture:
The fairest lock of fortune is display'd,
And should be seiz'd on by the bold and worthy.

Fair. You talk in clouds above my purpose quite;
Which was but to enforce the cause of mercy,
And show how much is gain'd by stopping here;
To tell you what my conscience makes opinion, 170
And strengthen that opinion by your voice.

Crom. 'T is true indeed—I had forgot myself;
But whither was I hurried in my zeal?
E'en I can descant on a pleasing theme:
Can you forgive me? though 't is hard indeed;
Exalted virtue can with ease forgive
A calumny, but not a praise.—No more.
Heav'n can witness for me, with what true accord
My thoughts meet yours! how willing I would stop
The arm of violence, and make the law, 180
Stern as she is, assume a face of smiles.
The death of Charles is far from my design—
And yet the general outcry is for justice:

He has been much to blame, you know he has ;
And (but I soften those unruly thoughts)
Were I to speak the dictates of my heart,
I could not find a punishment too great
To fall upon the man, who should, like Charles,
Forget all right, and waste with lavish hand
The rich revenue of his people's love.

190

Fair. Dearly he suffers for misguided steps,
And knows that misery he meant to give;
He feels the bondage he design'd for us,
And by the want of freedom counts its value.

Crom. I pity him; and would the commons think with me,
He were as safe as Cromwell; and, brave Fairfax,
We will endeavour it; and may that power,
Whose arm has fought the battle of our cause,
Incline them all to think like you—or me!
I will about it. Yet remember, Fairfax,
The posture of these times: consider, too,
How great your expectations ought to be:
Would Fairfax listen to the voice of Cromwell,
He should have nearer hopes than Charles's life:
Somewhat as great as your desert should crown you,
And make you partner of the highest honours.

[*Aside.*

200

[*Exit.*

Fair. The highest honours! what can Cromwell mean?
Acquit me, Heaven! I fought not but for justice,
Rage fir'd me not, nor did ambition blind;
No party led me, and no interest bound;
My tie was conscience, and my cause was freedom.
When Fairfax listens to another call,
May his next stroke in battle be his last!

210

Enter IRETON.

Ire. Fairfax, I come, commission'd by the army,

To know your pleasure, if you think it meet
 That they should march and quarter nearer London :
 The public safety makes it requisite :
 But they attend your orders ere they move.

Fair. The public safety ! Say what new alarm,
 What danger so awakes security, 220
 That in her fright she thus lays hold of caution ?

Ire. The safety of the commons, of yourself,
 Of the high court of justice ; who to-morrow
 Against a tyrant proves the people's pow'r,
 And brings offending majesty to justice :
 This may excite his yet remaining friends,
 Arm'd with despair, to some attempt of danger.
 Who can be too secure ? The man whose pillow
 Prevention guards, may sleep in ease and safety.

Fair. To bring offending majesty to justice ? 230

Ire. To the scaffold.

Fair. Ha !

Ire. Why do you start ?

Fair. Your zeal too much transports you.
 Ireton, farewell—and let me gain belief,
 When I affirm this moral to thy ear :
 Conscience than empire more content can bring,
 And to be just, is to be more than king. [Exit.

Enter CROMWELL.

Crom. It is enough, good kinsman, let him go—
 And yet I could well wish that he was ours— 240
 But 't is no matter—You began to warm,
 And the good cause sat burning on thy cheek ;
 Thou hast a well-turn'd tongue ; but list thee, Ireton,
 Hear my design (for still my heart is thine)
 The commons most are ours : the weeder's care

Has, from the garden of our enterprise,
 Thrown out the rubbish that disgrac'd the soil :
 And now our growth looks timely. This you saw,
 When by my means a hundred doubted members
 Were by the army seiz'd upon their entrance, 250
 And since expell'd the house. Independency
 Roots itself fast ; while presbytery force
 Withers unseen. Would Fairfax had been ours !

Ire. I cannot see that his adherence to us
 Could prosper much our cause, or his defection
 Make us decline one moment from our purpose.

Crom. You mistake, Ireton ; Fairfax stands the first
 In interest with the very men I hate :
 Therefore his joint endeavour would be found
 The easiest means to bring my point to bear : 260
 Besides, he stands the fairest in the love
 Of our whole party. Were we link'd together,
 The army too were ours ; and their keen swords
 Are powerful arguments. We shall thrive, however—
 I have it—He shall hence, and on an expedition
 Not the most just ; I know his squeamish honour,
 If it surmise an action the least tainted,
 Will throw up this employment : then 't is mine :
 And while I have dame Fortune, she shall please me.

Ire. But the main turn of all your enterprise 270
 Hangs on to-morrow, on the death of Charles :
 'T is from his scaffold only you must mount
 To what your wishes aim at.

Crom. Fear not that.
 I have to do with men, upon whose tempers
 I know to work,—Those who love piety,
 I with the vehemence of prayer encounter,
 And through the spirit practise on their passions.

Those who are crafty I subdue with fraud,
 And wile them to my purpose. To the bloody 280
 I promise slaughters, deaths and executions:
 Gold gains the covetous; and praise the proud.
 There is another sort—but they are easy;
 Your honest men, who never wear distrust;
 For honesty 's the jaundice of the mind,
 That makes us think our neighbours like ourselves:
 Let us together. Ireton, here it lies;
 When fools believe, wise men are sure to rise. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter FAIRFAX.

Fairfax.

Oh, glory! how deceitful is thy view!
 Such are thy charms, that o'er th' uncertain way
 Of vice or faction, thou, to hide the danger,
 Dost to the outward eye show fair appearance;
 Which when the follower steps on, down he sinks,
 And then too late looks backward to the path
 Of long-neglected virtue.

Enter Lady FAIRFAX.

Lady Fair. My dearest Fairfax, call not this intrusion;
 Long has obedience combated with love,
 Ere I would press upon your privacy:
 If love has conquer'd, love may be forgiven.
 The faults of tenderness (if faults they are)
 E'en in offending wear the seal of pardon.
 Why are you thus alone—and why thus chang'd?

Fair. My gentle lady, thoughts of deep concern,
 That to the last recesses of my soul
 Travel, with pain and penitence their guides,
 At length have found the company they like ;
 Busy reflection, moping melancholy,
 And silence the sure guard that keeps the door. 20

Lady Fair. I cannot blame your griefs ; but come to share
 them.

Indeed the cause is just : but, good my lord,
 Let not despair take hold of that brave heart,
 And boast a conquest which your foes ne'er could.
 If (as I long have thought) the King be wrong'd,
 Seek to redress, and not lament his fortunes.
 I am a woman, not design'd for war ;
 Yet could this hand (weak as you think its grasp),
 Nerv'd by my heart's companion, resolution,
 Display the royal banner in the field, 30
 And shame the strength of manhood in this cause.
 Forgive this warmth : I ne'er till now, my lord,
 Gave you unask'd my thoughts : but I perceive
 Your heart is wounded, and I came to heal it ;
 To offer you the balm of wholesome counsel,
 And temper my persuasion with my love.

Fair. Thou hast been more than I could hope in woman :
 Thy beauty, thy least excellence. Thou appear'st
 Like a fair tree, the glory of the plain,
 The root thy honour, and the trunk thy friendship, 40
 (That stands the rudest blast of cold adversity)
 From whence branch out a thousand different boughs ;
 Candour, humility, and angel truth,
 And every leaf a virtue. True, my love,
 While I conceiv'd our liberties in danger,
 I fought in their defence ; but cannot bear

This bold design upon the life of Charles.
We took up arms to keep the law entire,
Not to defend its open violation.

Lady Fair. I know thy honest heart, it hates a wrong: 50
'T was principle, not party, urg'd thee on
To fight their cause: but Cromwell's specious wiles
Pervert the justice of thy fair designs,
And make thy virtue pander to his will.

Fair. Cromwell has art—but still I think him honest:
Yet in our late discourse his speech, methought,
Appear'd disjointed; and he wav'd the theme
I spoke about—the safety of the king—
At parting, too, his words betray'd a purpose
Beyond the limits of a commonwealth, 60
And talk'd of highest honours—but I hope
That my suspicions wrong him.

Lady Fair. No, my lord;
Rather increase them, keep them still alive
To arm against his black designs: discretion,
At the surmise of danger, wakes incessant;
Nor drops the eyelid till she sleeps in safety.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. The duke of Richmond and a reverend bishop
Desire to see you.

Fair. Wait upon them hither; 70
I guess at their desires, and would to Heaven
My pow'r could grant them what my wish confirms!

Lady Fair. And wherefore not, my lord? The army yours,
Who can dispute your will? Command them hither.
And be their threats the safety of the king.

Fair. Betray my trust! Thou canst not mean such baseness.
Should I (which much I doubt, for Cromwell's faction

Equals my pow'r, and more, among the soldiers)
 Make them revolt, what would my conscience say?
 'T would be a mountain crime, a molehill good. 80
 The whiteness of my fair design to Charles,
 Spread o'er the visage of the means that gave it,
 Like thinnest lawn upon an Æthiop face,
 Would cover, not conceal the blackness. No, my love,
 Virtue and baseness never meet together.

Enter Bishop Juxon and Duke of Richmond.

Juxon. A mournful errand, good my lord of Fairfax,
 Makes us thus rude. My gentle lady, stay;—
 Your voice will help the music of our plaint,
 And swell the notes to moving melody:
 Ill-fated Charles, deserted as he is, 90
 Lives in your fair report (or fame has err'd)—
 Join in our concert, as you're next his heart,
 You know to touch the string that sounds to pity.

Fair. My lords, I guess your purpose, and assure you,
 If my persuasion or my wish avail,
 Charles feels no stroke, till nature gives the blow.
 Long may the fruit of health adorn the tree,
 And ripen with his years in warmer times!

Rich. 'T is truly spoke, my lord, and worthy Fairfax;
 Whom I have still consider'd in this light— 100
 As nobly just, and but at worst misled.

Juxon. How would this man adorn the royal cause,
 Who makes rebellion wear the face of virtue!

[Aside to Richmond.]

How I am pleas'd to find you feel this woe,
 And strive for its prevention—let these speak— *[Weeps.]*
 These eyes must else have known the dismal office
 To see the widow's and the orphan's sorrows:

Complaint had been my language, care my bed,
 And contemplation my uneasy pillow.
 Now by your hopes of mercy plead this cause;
 Know it a labour that will pay itself,
 E'en in this world—and when you mount above,
 You will behold it of so vast a value,
 It will outweigh th' offences of your life.

110

Fair. Without this intercession, good my lord,
 I had done all within my feeble pow'r;
 Yet think what outcries'din the parliament,
 How many zealots call aloud for justice!
 Then think what you may hope, and what not fear.

Lady Fair. No matter, Fairfax; 't is a virtuous cause, 120
 And Heav'n will bless the purpose with success.

Juxon. There mercy spoke, and in her softest voice:
 And Heaven, I doubt not, signs the prophecy.

Enter CROMWELL.

Crom. Indeed! Does Fairfax keep such company?
 Shame on his pitying heart! His soul's unmann'd,
 His resolution dwindled to a girl's:
 Now, in the name of fight, is this the man
 Whom armies fled from, and whom conquest lov'd?
 Behold him now crept to a private corner,
 Counting out tears with priests and women. [Aside.] 130

Fair. See
 Where Cromwell comes. I will once more assail him,
 And be yourselves the witness of his answer.
 Good Cromwell, welcome! and let my petition,
 Join'd with these lords, prevail upon your pity;
 Let Charles have life: is that so hard a boon?
 In lieu of three fair kingdoms, give him life.

Crom. Why this address to me? am I the parliament?

'T is they who justly call him to account,
And form this high tribunal.

140

Juxon. Justly, Cromwell!

Crom. Ay, good bishop, justly!

I cry you mercy. By the good old cause!
It is but gratitude in you to plead:
Episcopacy was the rock he split on;
And he has ventur'd fairly for your lawn:
How learnedly did he uphold your cause,
When Henderson inveigh'd against your mitres!
Did he not write full nobly? Say'st thou, bishop?

Juxon. His conscience prompted him to what he did; 150
His zeal for us can never be forgotten.

Crom. His conscience! you say true—his conscience did it:
He would have stretch'd to arbitrary sway,
And swallow'd down our liberties and laws:
His conscience would have soon digested them.

Fair. Let us not into insult turn our pow'r;
Good-fortune is not wedded to our arms:
Conquest, like a young maiden with her lover,
If roughly treated, turns her smiles to frowns,
And hates where once she lov'd. 160

Crom. I stand corrected.

To me then you apply in Charles's favour,
And wait my answer; which is briefly thus:
I am but one, and (as the weaker must)
Flow in the current of majority:
My single voice, be it against or for,
Avails him little: if the rest incline
To think of mercy and of Charles together,
'T is fairly done, and e'en to Cromwell's wish:
This is the sum of all I can deliver— 170
Fairfax, I have matter for your private ear.

Juxon. We humbly take our leaves.

Fair. My lords, farewell!

[*Exeunt Jux. Rich. and Lady Fairfax.*]

Crom. How can you waste your time on trash like this?
 Were Fairfax' honour to be doubted, this might make
 The child suspicion grow to certainty;
 But we are confident in you : your actions speak.
 Yet, Fairfax, do not let thy noble eye
 Catch the contagion of weak-judging pity,
 And sympathise with beggars. To my purpose : 180
 The council, at whose head your wisdom sits,
 Weighing some depositions 'gainst the king,
 Would have your judgment's sanction : they request
 Your presence there : I bear their will with pleasure.

Fair. It is not needed, sir.

As to the purpose of their meeting, say,
 If they incline to mercy, let their charge
 Be weaker than it is ; but if to rigour,
 They have, I fear, too much of that already :
 Let them (if friendly Fairfax may advise) 190
 Judge with that candour they expect of Heaven.

Crom. You will not go, then ?

Fair. Say I cannot go.

My reason pleads against so bad a deed,
 And inclination holds me ; nay, yet more,
 A secret impulse strikes upon my soul,
 Which, though I had the will, would yet detain me.

Crom. Folly and superstition ! drive them hence ;
 And, in exchange, wear honours and renown :
 Of this I've said—And, noble Fairfax, believe me, 200
 That when the wind of promise and of hope
 Stretches the canvass out of resolution,
 The bark design flies swift before the gale,

And quickly anchors in good-fortune's bay ;
Then we unlade our freight of doubts and fears,
And barter them for happiness and glory. [Exit.

Fair. He who embarks himself in Cromwell's ship
Outsails fair truth and every honest purpose.
'T is now too plain—How could I doubt so long ?
My honesty has made me Cromwell's tool : 210
His arts have turn'd my virtue to a sword,
And now 't is bared against me.
But say, shall Fairfax, whom in open field
An army could not conquer, fall a prey
To the ambitious prospects of one man ?
No, Fairfax, rouse up thy resentment's force,
And rescue thy renown from infamy. [Exit.

SCENE II.

A Chamber. King CHARLES discovered reading.

King. What art thou, life, so dearly lov'd by all ?—
What are thy charms, that thus the great desire thee,
And to retain thee part with pomp and titles ? 220
To buy thy presence, the gold-watching miser
Will pour his bags of mouldy treasure out,
And grow at once a prodigal. The wretch
Clad with disease and poverty's thin coat,
Yet holds thee fast, though painful company.
Oh life ! thou universal wish, what art thou ?—
Thou 'rt but a day—a few uneasy hours :
Thy morn is greeted by the flocks and herds,
And every bird that flatters with its note
Salutes thy rising sun : thy noon approaching, 230
Then haste the flies and every creeping insect

To bask in thy meridian ; that declining,
 As quickly they depart, and leave thy evening
 To mourn the absent ray : night at hand,
 Then croaks the raven conscience, time mispent :
 The owl despair screams hideous, and the bat
 Confusion flutters up and down——
 Life's but a lengthen'd day not worth the waking for.

Enter Queen.

My dearest queen !
 I have been summing up th' amount of life, 240
 But found no value in it till you came.

Queen. Do not perplex yourself with thoughts like those :
 Ill-fortune at the worst returns to better ;
 At least we think so, as it grows familiar.

King. No, I was only arming for the worst.
 I have try'd the temper of my inmost soul,
 And find it ready now for all encounters :
 Death cannot shake it.

Queen. Do not talk of death :
 The apprehension shakes my tender heart ; 250
 Ages of love, I hope, are yet to come,
 Ere that black hour arrives : such chilling thoughts
 Disgrace the lodging of that noble breast.

King. What have I not to fear ? Thus close confin'd—
 To-morrow forc'd to trial. Will those men,
 Who insolently drag me to the bar,
 Stop in the middle of their purpose ?—No.
 I must prepare for all extremities :
 And (be that Pow'r ador'd that lends me comfort)
 I feel I am—Oh, do not weep, my queen ! 260
 Rather rejoice with me, to find my thoughts
 Outstretch the painful verge of human life,

And have no wish on earth but thee ! 'Tis there
Indeed I feel : peace and resignation
Had wander'd o'er the rooms of every thought,
To shut misfortune out ; but left this door
Unclos'd, through which calamity
Has enter'd in thy shape to seize my heart.

Queen. Be more yourself, my lord ; let majesty
Take root within thy heart, nor meanly bend
Before ill-fortune's blast.

279

King. Oh, doubt me not !
'Tis only on the side where you are plac'd
That I can know a fear. For Charles's self,
Let fierce encounter with the sword of danger
Bring him to bloodiest proof ; and, if he shrinks,
Despise him. Here, I glory in my weakness.
He is no man whom tenderness not melts,
And love so soft as thine. Let us go in.
And if kind Heaven designs me longer stay
On this frail earth, I shall be only pleas'd
Because I have thy presence here to crown me.
But if it destines my immediate end,
(Hard as it is, my queen, to part with thee)
I say farewell, and to the blow resign,
That strikes me here—to make me more divine.

280

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter CROMWELL and BRADSHAW.

Cromwell.

It shall be better, Bradshaw : do not think
Desert, though lowly plac'd, escapes our eye ;
To me it is as precious in the valley.

As glittering on the mountain's top :—
 I praise myself that I have found thee out :
 'Tis not my favour, Bradshaw, but thy worth
 Brings thee to light; thou dost not owe me aught :
 Now, Bradshaw, art thou our high president ;
 Thou hast a heart well temper'd to the cause :
 Thou look'st on monarchy in a true light ; 10
 And where the cause is just wilt shut out pity.
 Pity !——

The fool's forgiveness and the mother's tear ;
 The indiscretion of th' unpractis'd maid,
 Who through that organ hears her lover's plaint,
 And listens to her ruin.

Brad. My good sir,

Think not of Bradshaw thus. My soul is firm ;
 The melting eye and the relenting heart
 Ne'er wrong'd my resolution. As to kings, 20
 To monarchy, and to superior state,
 That I disclaim'd ; till your exalted merit
 Alter'd my purpose in my own despite,
 And, when I meant to level, rais'd you high.

Crom. Spoke in a hearty zeal for our good cause.

That I have the same thoughts of thee, let this
 Thy present weighty office speak, which should,
 If Cromwell's nature bent to partiality,
 Have fallen upon my kinsman, Ireton ; one
 Of good regard, and hearty in the service : 30
 But Cromwell's heart points only to desert,
 The north of all his purpose. Thou art ours ;
 And though thy modesty at first declin'd
 To sit our head, and lead our counsels right,
 Yet I determin'd not to lose thy worth,
 If importunity could win it.

Brad. True, sir;
 I own I thought myself unequal to it;
 Nor am I yet convinc'd: yet what I want in merit,
 I will make out in rigour on the king, 40
 In justice to the people and to Heaven.

Crom. Bradshaw,
 Thou art the very sinew of our cause;
 The spirit of design and warmth of zeal
 Glow in thy purpose. I adore that man,
 Who, once resolv'd, outflies e'en expedition.
 Thou art the glory of our brotherhood!
 And spare not to reproach, to taunt and blacken,
 T' insult their party; nay, the king himself:
 Mindful that all his dignity is lost, 50
 And he, for monstrous crime, brought forth to justice.
 Seek an occasion, too, to talk with Fairfax,
 And urge to him the strong necessity
 Of the king's death—Perhaps he may prove angry—
 But do not thou regard it. The time presses;
 And thou hast liv'd too long to squander that.

Brad. Good sir, farewell! my love would offer more,
 But my haste wrongs it. [Exit.

Crom. Go to, Bradshaw,
 Such are the tools with which the wise must work: 60
 And yet he too is wise, and might cajole
 A weaker than himself, and does.
 He is my proper instrument
 To operate on those below my notice.
 Thus by comparison are all things known;
 And by such under-steps as him, and lower,
 Do the ambitious mount to fame and honour.
 Besides, I choose me those whom zeal inflames,
 Who failing to convince you, will compel:

Such, prompted by enthusiasm's force,
 And in predestination's armour cas'd,
 Will to the mouth of danger plant their breasts,
 And outfight phrensy and despair. But lo!
 Where Ireton comes.

70

Enter IRETON.

My trusty friend,
 What look wears our design?

Ire. Such as a bride

The morning after bliss; she smiles upon us,
 And laughs at what she fear'd. Petitions call
 For justice on the king—Our faction thrives;
 Murmur increases to a public outcry.
 All are 'gainst Charles, save a few pitying hearts,
 Who melt with Fairfax, and incline to mercy.

80

Crom. 'Tis well. Send post unto the army, Ireton,
 And let those sums of money I have order'd
 Be secretly dispers'd among the soldiers:
 It will remind them of their promises:
 Gold is specific for the memory.
 O gold! wer't not for thee, what great design,
 What bold ambition, that outstretches justice,
 Could have success? Thou buy'st our very prayers;
 Thou art the heart of opposition,
 And the tooth of faction. Wer't not for thy aid,
 Success would vary like the uncertain wind,
 And honesty might prosper! Hie thee, Ireton;
 I must to the king; I have some bills to offer him,
 Which, for the life of Charles, Charles would not sign;
 And his refusal turns to our advantage.
 Thou shalt know more hereafter—Now dispatch.

90

Ire. Good sir, I fly.

[*Exit.*]

Crom. Ha ! whom have we yonder ?

101

O ! 't is the wife of Fairfax : once as hearty,
As zealous for the cause as Cromwell's self,
And wrought her lord to think so. Now, O woman,
Such is thy varying nature, that the waves
Are not more fluctuating than thy opinions,
Nor sooner are displac'd. To her is owing
The wayward pity of her vassal lord.

Oh, 't is certain danger to have such a woman,
Who, when man leaves himself to toy with her,
Knows how to win, and practise on his weakness !
But let me think—All women may be won.
The dame of Ephesus, the Anne of Richard,
Show us a woman's grief and resolution.
Why may not she be wrought up to my purpose ?
I can approach in what they like, in flattery.

110

Enter Lady FAIRFAX.

Lady Fair. Stay, worthy Cromwell, and attend my prayer;
Hear me—and may thy answer be propitious,
As this kind hour that favours my address !
O may my falling tears, that plead for mercy,
Drop on thy heart, and melt it to compliance,
Nor disregard the suit because a woman's !
Cromwell is noble ; and the noble soul
Grants the most free indulgence to the weak,
Because its generous nature pleads their cause.

120

Crom. Such is a woman's weakness, that she thinks
T' impose on us by what allures herself ;
But I must turn this project upon her,
And fairly put it to an equal proof,
Who best dissembles—Cromwell, or a woman.
Lady, I must esteem a compliment,

[*Aside.*

131

When from a tongue that seldom errs that way.
 From what I know, and what I oft have heard,
 You can dress praise like truth : that praise I mean,
 Which, from our liking to the theme we speak of,
 Swells to extravagance (tho' still our thoughts)—
 Such warmth is virtue's fault ; and such, I hope,
 May be your kind excuse for praising me.

Lady Fair. Talk not of praise, good sir ; your merit
 shames it,

When from a woman's mouth.

140

Crom. Well turn'd again.

[*Aside.*]

O lady, were I but to speak my thoughts
 Of you, and your brave lord, you would conclude
 'T were praise inded—for virtue looks within
 For her faults only, not for her perfections.
 Hear some of those : you once espous'd our cause,
 E'en with persuasion's warmth ; and well you sued.
 We have not, sure, o'erlook'd desert so far
 To merit opposition !

The state is busy—but the time will come

150

When her best office shall be pleasing you.

Lady Fair. You mock me, sir ; I do not wish that time,
 Vain as you think my sex. I came to say—

Crom. E'en to that purpose, to the life of Charles.

It cannot be : the people cry for justice :
 Would I could stop its course ! But, gentle lady,
 Think it more wise to fly a falling pile,
 Than strive to prop its ruin. Charles must die.

Lady Fair. O gracious Cromwell !——

Crom. Nay, but hear me on.

160

Why will you thus employ your eloquence,
 Which our whole council would with liking hear,
 To help impossibilities ? Good lady,

Rather employ it (and you know the way)
To teach your lord to value rising fortune,
And make his fame——

Lady Fair. As black as yours will be.
Shame on thy dark designs, and the whole cause,
If only such a deed can make it prosper!
Be the heart bloodless that conceives the act— 170
The tongue accurst that dares avow the purpose,
And the hand blasted that obeys the order!
May his life here be all the hell we think of,
Yet find a greater in the other world! [Exit.

Crom. How wayward and perverse a thing is woman!
How much unlike the softness we expect,
When rage and trifles vex them! In the heat
And the full vigour of their first enjoyment,
Distrust succeeds their love; and he who pleases
Is hunted by their jealousy to hate. 180
Fairfax and Bradshaw earnest in dispute!
I will not interrupt them, but to Charles. [Exit.

Enter FAIRFAX and BRADSHAW.

Brad. Why all this heat, my lord? because I said
That Charles deserves to die? Why, I repeat it:
And would you master this unmanly rage,
I might to reason prove it, but not phrensy.

Fair. Well, I am calm—Speak out your bloody purpose,
What hell devises, and what Bradshaw thinks.

Brad. Cast your eye backward then, and let us view
E'en the beginning of this Charles's reign: 190
In the first year a raging plague destroy'd us,
And was prophetic of our woes to come:
Did it not sweep whole multitudes away
Fast as the sword, which Charles has since unsheath'd?

" Did he not follow still his father's steps,
 " Retain his ministry, pursue his aims ?
 " Would he, tho' pray'd and threaten'd by the parliament,
 " Give up those men whose counsels had misled him ?
 " And is not that prince weak, to say no more,
 " Who from a general outcry guards the man 200
 " Whose bold ambition strikes at liberty,
 " At native freedom, and the subjects' right ?"

Fair. You but this moment blam'd my warmth,
 And art thyself transported.

Brad. Grant I be :

'Tis in the cause that liberty approves,
 And every honest Englishman must own it.
 But to proceed—Those men he still held fast,
 Or parted with them as the heart drops blood :
 " Witness the Earl of Strafford : " tax'd the land 210
 By grievous impositions ; levy'd war
 Against the commons, and the kingdom's peace.
 But I forget me that I speak to Fairfax,
 Who has so often fought against his arms,
 And taught success to know the cause of right.

Fair. I fought for reparation of our wrongs—
 But cannot think that it consists in murder.
 I would not have him die.

Brad. By the good cause,

It does portend some more than common change, 220
 When generals plead for mercy ! shame it hence,
 And let your visage wear the glow of rage ;
 Let Prynne's undaunted soul inform thy breast,
 And drive weak pity thence.

Fair. I'll hear no more :
 Thy servile tongue may spare its hireling office,
 It roots my purpose firmer. In thy speech

I read design, tho' oratory's flowers
 Strive to conceal the rancour of the heart.
 O eloquence! thou violated fair, 230
 How art thou woo'd, and won to either bed
 Of right or wrong! Oh, when injustice folds thee,
 Dost thou not curse thy charms for pleasing him,
 And blush at conquest? But the juncture calls,
 Nor will I leave one moment unemploy'd
 Till the king's safety be confirm'd. [Exit.
Brad. 'T is well.

I must to other folk—here time is lost.
 This man has stepp'd into the stream of mischief,
 Just like the boy, who tries the water's cold, 240
 And shrinking pulls his foot to land: men, like me,
 Plunge boldly in, and weather to their point. [Exit.

SCENE II.

*Changes to the King's Apartment. Enter King and Bishop
 Juxon.*

Juxon. Why does your highness seem so lost in thought?
 Consider not so deeply, good my lord.

King. The purport of my dream this afternoon
 Has set this visage on. I'll tell thee, Juxon—
 Finding my spirits faint, I laid me down,
 And courted sleep to ease me; to my wish
 It quickly seiz'd my eyelids, and methought
 (So fancy painted) former times return'd, 250
 Grandeur encircled me, and regal state;
 My people's love flew round about my throne,
 On acclamation's wing; 't was glory all,
 And such a reign as Charles has pray'd for. Homage,

The bond of friendship, and the oath of trust,
Were all before me: straight the pleasing scene,
Quick as the fearful eye can wink, was chang'd;
And, in its room, a vast and dreary plain,
Comfortless, wild, without inhabitant,
Stretch'd out a dismal length that tir'd the eye. 260
I was about to go, when kind adversity
Pull'd me behind, and, as I turn'd around,
Show'd me where innocence stood weeping by.
He whisper'd in my ear, that she alone
Of all my boasting friends had staid with me.
The thought struck deep; I wak'd—and, good my lord,
I found my weeping queen within my arms.

Enter CROMWELL.

Crom. If I disturb you, sir, I ask your pardon:
Necessity will sometimes be importunate,
And outgo compliment. 270

King. Your business, sir?

Crom. Know then, whatever may be thought of Cromwell,
He pays this visit to approve his love,
His fair design and honesty of heart
To Charles—Solicitous to bring you good,
Behold two bills, in tenor much the same
With those before presented: I presume,
The eye in danger more distinctly sees,
Freed from security's thick film: these sign'd,
Rigour may break her sword, and concord join us. 280

King. Can the low peasant mount his thoughts with kings?
The servile judge of all men by themselves.
But know, mistaken man, the noble mind
Rises above distress; and terms, perhaps,
Which in the day of power I might accept,

Must be refus'd in this : but these can never.
 There is no good that equals the exchange
 Of peaceful thoughts and an untainted mind.

Crom. Where were those thoughts in Charles's former days,
 When to despotic sway you stretch'd your view, 290
 And would have pull'd up laws ? when to that end
 You so caress'd your fav'rite Buckingham,
 The tool of your designs ? What were your thoughts
 When from the fair impeachment of the public
 You shelter'd up that monster minister,
 And hid him in the bosom of your fondness ?

Juxon. Insolent Cromwell ! know to whom thou speak'st ;
 Think what a distance Heaven has set between you ;
 And be your words as humble as your state.

Crom. Distance ? good bishop ! but I cry you mercy ; 300
 " For thus the clergy will still argue on,
 " Deny from pique, assert from prejudice ;
 " Show us the lesson, seldom the example,
 " And preach up laws, which they will ne'er obey."
 But thou art trash below the note of Cromwell :
 To thee I speak, protector of black Buckingham.
 " What must that monarch be, who lets one man
 " Ingross the offices of place and pow'r,
 " Who, with the purloin'd money of the state,
 " Buys popularity, and whose careless eye 310
 " Sees our fair trade destroy'd by corsair force,
 " And pirate violence ; who merchandises trusts,
 " And highest posts—and whose unbounded pow'r
 " Does on his worthless kindred lavish titles ?"

King. Were I the person that thy malice speaks,
 I should deserve this treatment. Thy base charge
 Strikes at my honesty as king and man,
 And forces me to answer. Well I know,

That for my actions here, to Heaven alone
 I stand accountable; yet stooping thus,
 (Low as to thee) I thus avow my justice :
 Have I not still maintain'd the subjects' rights,
 Preserv'd religion pure, nay, struggled for it,
 E'en to this hour, the witness of thy insolence ?
 What would your faction have ? If monarchy,
 Must I not govern by the acts of state ?
 I am a monarch else without a council.
 Would you reduce the state to anarchy ?
 You are a council then without a pow'r.

320

Crom. You feel our power (as slightly as you term it).

King. Such as a robber's, by surprise and force :
 Where is your right from Heaven ?

331

Crom. Power !

The right of nature and the free-born man.

King. Leave me.

Crom. You speak as if you still were king.

King. If not, what am I then ?

Crom. Charles Stuart, nothing more.

King. Well may the servile herd insult and threaten,
 When they behold the lion in the toils.

340

Crom. You may complain as much as suits your will,
 You 've still that comfort left—So fare you well. [Exit.

Juxon. Thus is good-fortune treated by the base :
 Oh, did she know how much they shame her favours,
 She would confer them only on the great !
 Be cheerful, sir ; he is not worth a thought.

King. O Juxon ! think what majesty must feel,
 Who bears an insult from a subject tongue.
 But let him hence—I am compos'd again,
 And for the worst prepar'd. All-gracious Heaven !
 You gave me power, and you may take it back ;

350

You gave me life, and may reclaim the gift;
That as you please—But spare this luckless land,
And save it from misfortune's rugged hand!
My every wish is for its joys' increase,
And my last prayer shall be my people's peace. [Exeunt.]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter King CHARLES, the Queen, and Lady FAIRFAX.

Queen.

Is it like love, thus to persuade me hence?
Is it like love, alas! in me to go?
Can she be faithful to her luckless lord,
Who will be absent in affliction's hour?
Is it not then the lenient hand of love
Proves its best office? Then the virtuous wife
Shines in the full meridian of her truth,
And claims her part of sorrow: O, my lord,
Have I been so unthrifty of thy joy,
That you deny me to partake your woe? 10

King. No, my best queen—you wrong my heart's design.
'T is not my wish advises—but my fear,
My fears for thee, the tenderest part of Charles:
When thou art safe beyond their barbarous pow'r,
I cannot feel misfortune.

Queen. But I shall,
More than to share e'en death with thee:—
My sorrows will be doubled if I go:
The pangs of separation must be great,
And my conceit of what my Charles may feel 20

Exceed reality—O let me stay—
 I was prepar'd to suffer all things with you,
 But not the shock of parting.

Lady Fair. Welcome, tears !

Who that have virtue can behold this scene,
 And not be actors in it ?

King. Now 't is past.

I would have sooner spoke, but pow'rful nature
 First claim'd my tears, ere she would lend me words.
 It must not be, my love ; thy pray'r to stay
 (The growing proof of thy eternal love)
 Argues against thee to my tender heart,
 And forces thee away. This worthy lady
 Has found the means, and made the generous offer :
 Her care prepares your flight : the present hour,
 That forces me before their black tribunal,
 Will hold all eyes regardless of your steps,
 And make security thy guide :—farewell !
 Till we shall meet again, thy dear idea
 Shall in my waking fancy still revive,
 And fill up every dream.

30

40

Queen. My dearest lord,

Can you so easily pronounce—farewell,
 When that farewell may be perhaps—for ever ?
 O can you leave me thus ?—
 Methinks our parting should affect the world,
 And nature sympathize with griefs like ours—
 O let me stay, at least, till this black day
 Be past, that I may know the worst.
 To be in doubt is worse than to be certain ;
 My apprehension will increase my woe,
 And bring the blackest scenes of death before me.

50

King. No more, my queen ! that were to risk thy safety,

And make me more unhappy in thy danger :
Farewell.

Queen. O, yet a little longer !
Each moment now is worth an age before.
Thou never-resting time ! 't is only now
I count thy value. O, my dearest lord !
Who could believe, when first we met in love, 60
That we should know a parting worse than death ?
Do not go yet.

King. Heaven knows I would not go—
But dire necessity must be obey'd :
And see where he appears in his worst form.
Keep in thy tears, my love, lest he suspect—
And teach thy heart to say farewell at once.

Enter Colonel TOMLINSON.

Tom. My lord, I have orders to attend your majesty
To Westminster.

King. A moment spent in private, 70
And I am ready. [Exit Tom.

Do not droop, my queen !
Exert the strongest vigour of thy soul,
Call up thy piety, thy awful virtue,
Thy resolution, and thy sex's pride,
And take their friendly counsel ; they will soon
Determine you to think of Charles, as one
Beyond the power of faction in this world,
And ready for another—Fare thee well !
I have this compliment to pay thy worth, 80
That now I leave thee with more tender thoughts
Than first I met thy love—this tear—adieu !
Now, sir, lead on. [70 Col. Tomlinson entering.

Queen. O stay, my dearest lord !

[*Exeunt King and Col. Tomlinson.*

Let me assure thee of my faith and love——

Witness, thou awful ruler of the world,

How much I feel in parting—how my heart

Labours to break to prove its constancy ;

How my affection still has call'd thee dear ;

Never unkind, till in this parting moment.

90

What do I say ? Alas ! my Charles is gone——

Fancy presented him before my eyes,

And my tears wrong'd my sight—he's gone for ever.

Lady Fair. Good madam, think your safety calls upon you ;

Your very sorrows are not here secure :

Tho' you neglect your own, yet think his ease,

The ease of Charles, depends upon your flight :

I have provided every proper means,

They wait your will.——

Queen. Kind lady, I will go——

100

But, O ! be just to nature, and to pity,

And own 't is hard——I thank your friendly tears,

They speak my meaning——but I weary you.

The wretch who feels misfortunes will complain,

And I have wondrous reason——O my Charles !

Since I must go, may every adverse star

Dart on my wand'ring head, and leave thy sky

Deck'd with propitious planets only !——May thy life,

Clear as thy innocence, adorn the world,

And be the theme of wonder !——O my heart ! [*Exeunt.*] 110

Enter Marquis of LINDBSEY, meeting the Duke of RICHMOND.

Lind. Saw you the king pass by ?

Rich. I did, my lord——

As to his coronation, not his trial :

Such was his look—such awful majesty
 Beam'd out on every side, and struck the gazer.
 No mark of sorrow furrow'd up his face,
 Nor stopp'd his smiles to his saluting friends ;
 Clear as his conscience was his visage seen,
 The emblem of his heart. As I approach'd,
 Richmond, said he, commend me to my friends ; 120
 Say, tho' my pow'r is gone, my wishes reach them,
 And ev'ry prayer that rises, breathes their welfare.
 'T is not in faction to subdue the spirit,
 Or break the noble mind : his speaking eyes
 Repeated his commands, and pierc'd my heart :
 E'en the base rabble—licens'd to insult—
 Struck with the dignity of kingly awe,
 Forgot their hire, and rose from praise to wonder.

Lind. Will you not follow, sir ? 't were worth remark,
 How he deports himself. 130

Rich. O fear not Charles :
 Let him encounter with a host of kings,
 And he shall stand the shock without a terror :
 Will he then shrink beneath a subject-brow,
 Tho' wrinkled with rebellion ?—No, good Lindsey,
 The lion cannot lose his kingly nature,
 The sun its heat, nor Charles his noble firmness :
 Perhaps, indeed, his gen'rous heart may feel,
 Not for himself, but for his tyrant judges ;
 He may lament depriv'd humanity, 140
 And blush to be mistaken in his people.
 See, what a mournful visage Fairfax wears,
 The sun of pleasantry eclips'd by thought :
 Now judgment combats inadvertency,
 And makes him curse success—but thus 't is ever
 When courage wildly starts out by itself,

Nor asks consideration's friendly aid;
 Confusion joins him; then he wanders thro'
 The thicket doubt, the maze perplexity,
 And finds at last repentance.

150

Enter FAIRFAX.

Fair. Now the scene
 Of bloodiest purpose is on foot, and acting;
 Now murder mounts the bench, array'd like justice,
 And points the sword at Charles—ill-fated man!
 Ha! who are those? The friends of Cromwell's faction?
 No; they are with their huntsmen on the scent
 Of royal blood, uncoupled for destruction.—
 If sorrow blinds me not—the duke of Richmond.

Rich. Good sir, how fare you?

Fair. Wondrous ill, my lord.

160

Could I but tell you what I feel—yet live,
 You would conclude me danger-proof—O, sir!
 Reflection shows me the vast tract I've pass'd,
 And stern impossibility denies
 One step return—yet (be my witness, Heaven)
 This dreadful day was never in my wish.

Rich. We do not think it was. But, gentle lord,
 Think of some means to ward this fatal blow,
 And save the king. Would you but go, my lord,
 Your struggle might—

170

Fair. Alas! what can I do?
 Was ever army routed by one man?
 I have an army there to combat with.
 Should I go there in order for prevention,
 Failing, my presence would be made consent,
 And I still more unhappy. O the change!
 This is the curse of independent pow'r,

For presbytery never meant it. Yet, my lords,
 You shall not say, that Fairfax only talks ;
 He will approve his honesty by deeds ; 180
 Somewhat he will attempt to save his honour,
 And clear it to the view of future times.

Rich. We do not doubt your will, nor yet your power.
 My lord, farewell. [*Exeunt Richmond and Lindsey.*]

Fair. My pow'r! — say, what is pow'r ?
 The vain extent of title and of land ;
 The barbarous impulse to the insulting wretch,
 To use his fellow-creature like a slave ;
 The woman's idol, and the man's misfortune,
 As it too often robs him of humanity. 190
 This is the worst degree — Behold the best,
 And now 't is lovely ; the redress of wrongs,
 Hunger's repast, and the large draught of thirst,
 The poor man's riches, and the rich man's wealth,
 When thus apply'd — The means to stop the death,
 The death of Charles — This is my wish for pow'r. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Draws, and discovers the High-Court. King, BRADSHAW,
 CROMWELL, IRETON, &c.

King. Sir, were my person all the danger here,
 I should not think it worth the pain of speech :
 Your charge 'gainst me is of the smallest force ;
 But 't is my people's liberties I prize, 200
 At which through me you strike : impeachments run
 In the king's name, and therefore cannot lie
 Against the king himself ; what earthly pow'r
 Can justly call me to account ? By what law

Have you erected this pretended court?—
 The house of commons?—Say, is that alone
 A court of judicature? Where are the lords
 To lend their aid? the king to sit supreme,
 And pass the nation's laws? Are these your means
 To bring the king to meet his parliament? 210
 To force him hither like a criminal?
 I lately did require, and press'd it warmly,
 Stoop'd almost to entreaty, to be heard
 Before both houses in the Painted-chamber;
 I told you what I had to offer there
 Concern'd the kingdom's safety more than mine:
 I was refus'd—Is this your boasted justice?
 Consider of it yet—and hear your king;
 If you do not, remember where it lies,
 The weight of this day's guilt; if you refuse— 220
 Do as you please—I have no more to say.

Brad. The court has something then to say to you,
 Which, though it may not please you, must be spoke:
 You have been charg'd with tyranny and murder,
 With levying arms against the commonwealth,
 And joining in rebellion 'gainst the people.

King. Sir, give me leave to speak, ere sentence passes,
 Against those imputations——

Brad. By your favour,
 Your time is past, and sentence now approaching. 230

King. Am I not to be heard?

Brad. 'T is now too late;
 You have disown'd us for a court of justice;
 We have too long been trifled with already,
 And must proceed—Attend your sentence, sir:
 The commons, in behalf of the whole people,
 Have constituted this high court of justice,

To try Charles Stuart, lately king of England.
 He has thrice heard his charge, and thrice deny'd
 The pow'r and jurisdiction of the court ; 240
 For which contempt, and proof of his high crimes,
 It does pronounce him tyrant, traitor, murderer,
 Adjudging him to death, by severing
 His head and body——This is the joint act,
 The sentence, judgment, and the resolution
 Of the whole court.

[The whole Court rises in token of their assent.]

King. Will you hear me, sir ?

Brad. Not after sentence.

King. No, sir ?

Brad. It is too late. Withdraw your prisoner. 250

“ King. May I not speak ?—I may, sir, after sentence.

“ Your favour, sir, I may, sir, after sentence.

“ Brad. Adjourn the court.”

[The King is brought forward; the scene closes.]

King. Deny'd to speak !——Why have I liv'd to this ?

When I had power, the meanest of my subjects,
 Not heard by me, would straight arraign my justice,
 And brand me with the hated name of tyrant.
 Will future ages, looking back to this,
 Credit the record ? They will rather deem it
 The black invective of a partial pen, 260
 And curse his memory that libell'd England.
 Sir, I am ready to attend your will,
 Do your worst office : if 't is your commission,
 Then lead me down this instant to the block ;
 'T will be a joyful hearing—for believe me,
 I would not live in longer fellowship
 With men, whom my best thoughts must call ungrateful.

Tom. Sir, my commands are to attend you back ;
I have no more in charge.

King. I follow you.

270

As he goes out, FAIRFAX enters.

Fair. Sir, let me trespass for a word or two,
Ere you remove your prisoner. [*To Tomlinson.*]

Tom. I obey, sir.

King. Your pleasure, sir? If you come here t'insult,
Spare not the taunt, nor the opprobrious smile :
I have to-day already borne so much,
That an addition will be scarcely felt.

Fair. Wrong me not so ; I bear a fairer purpose :
My heart, detesting this accursed day,
Comes to approve its honesty to Charles :
If I have often fought against thy arms,
My conscience dictated, and not my hate ;
Acquit me to thyself of this last act,
And judge the former as you please.

280

King. Good Fairfax,
The present times are liable to error,
I am a fatal instance ; then forgive me.
I had forgot how lately I had cause
To think you now no enemy to Charles ;
But sorrow forc'd down her lethargic draught,
Which had clos'd up the eye of memory.

290

Fair. Ill-fated prince ! how does thy firmness shine,
And make affliction glorious ! O, 't is thus
The truly great exert their resolution,
And make calamity a virtue : Cromwell now
Loses the barb'rous joy of his design,
To see misfortune's arrow fail to pierce thee,

King. Believe me, Fairfax, 'tis not innate firmness,
The dame morality, the stoic patience,
That furnish true serenity of mind : 300
I had try'd all these helps, but prov'd them weak,
And found the best philosophy in virtue.
Can the fond teacher's lesson, conn'd by rote,
Change the dark lodging of the murderer's breast
To the sun-lighted rooms of innocence ? Oh, no !
As to the agents of my present fate,
I look upon them with the eye of thanks ;
Who from this life of sorrow wing my parting,
And send me sooner to an happier throne.

Fair. Such resignation wears the noble mind, 310
And triumphs over death : but, gentle Charles !
Think not of death so soon ; live long and happy.
Fairfax will try his utmost stretch of power,
But you shall live, though this black day has happen'd :
Persuasion, pray'r, and force, shall all be us'd,
To make my promise good.

King. Good Fairfax, hear me ;
Nor indiscreetly throw thyself away,
To save the man whose wishes are to die.
I had remov'd my thoughts from earth, and now 320
'T will be such pain to call them back again——
Life is not worth the trouble : yet I thank thee.

Fair. This was but half my purpose : hear me on——
If in the hurry of intemp'rate zeal
I have outgone the justice of the cause,
And, erring in my judgment, fought in wrong,
Let this entreaty win thee to a pardon.

King. If to have my forgiveness makes thee clear,
Thou art as white as virtue.

Fair. Glorious Charles ! 330

But I will hasten to preserve his life,
 And make my gratitude my thanks; farewell!
 It is the common interest of mankind
 To let him live, to shine out an example.

King. Who dresses in good-fortune's gorgeous ermine
 Looks not so comely to a virtuous eye,
 As he who clothes him in repentant black.
 I tire your patience. Come, sir, lead the way;
 Lighter than fancy does my bosom feel,
 My thoughts are mercy, and my quiet conscience 340
 Tranquillity's still calm; no anxious fear
 Beats in my pulse, or ruffles me with care:
 If the bare hope of immortality
 Knows peace like this, what must the full enjoyments be?

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter FAIRFAX.

Fairfax.

WHY did I conquer—to repent of conquest?
 Who, though I fought for liberty alone,
 Will yet acquit me of the guilt that follows?
 Will future ages, when they read my page,
 (Though Charles himself absolves me of the deed)
 Spare me the name of regicide? Oh, no!
 I shall be blacken'd with my party's crimes,
 And damn'd with my full share, though innocent.
 In vain then 'gainst oppression have I warr'd,
 In vain for liberty uprear'd the sword;
 Posterity's black curse shall brand my name,

And make me live in infamy for ever.
 Now, valour, break thy sword ! thy standard, victory !
 Furl up thy ensigns, bold hostility,
 And sink into inaction ; since, alas !
 One tainted heart, or one ambitious brain,
 Can turn the current of the noblest purpose,
 And spoil the trophies of an age's war.
 But see where, to my wish, stern Cromwell comes ;
 Now urge him strongly for the life of Charles— 20
 And, if entreaty fails, avow thy purpose.

Enter CROMWELL.

Crom. Fairfax in thought ! My noble lord, good day.

Fair. To make it good, let Cromwell grant my prayer—
 So mercy and the sun shall shine together.

Crom. Still on this paltry subject ! Fairfax, why,
 Why will you wrong entreaty by this cause ?
 Fairfax is wise, and should not ask of Cromwell
 To grant what justice stops ; yours are not years
 When childhood prattles, or when dotage mopes : —
 Pardon the expression. 30

Fair. I forgive you all,
 All you can think, but rigour to the king.

Crom. Pr'ythee no more : this mercy that you pray for,
 As ill becomes the tongue as my severity ;
 Nay, worse. Would you obstruct the law
 In its due office ; nor permit the axe
 To fall upon offenders such as Charles ?
 Would you see tyranny again arise,
 And spread in its foundation ? Let us then
 Seize on our general, Liberty, who still 40
 Has in the front of battle fought our cause,
 And led us on to conquest ; let us bind him

In the strong chains of rough prerogative,
And throw him helpless at the feet of Charles :
He will absolve us then, and praise our folly.

Fair. This is a sophistry too weak for reason :
You would excuse the guilt of Charles's death,
By showing me the opposite extreme ;
But can you find no mean, no middle course,
Steering between the danger of the last 50
And horror of the first ? I know you can.

Crom. It is not to be done : would Fairfax now,
When he has labour'd up the steep ascent,
And wasted time and spirits ; would he now,
When but one step exalts him to the summit,
Where to his eye the fair horizon stretches,
And ev'ry prospect greatness can command ;
Would he now stop, let go his fearful hold,
And tumble from the height ?

Fair. I aim at none : 60
Damn'd be all greatness that depraves the heart,
Or calls one blush from honesty !—No more—
I shall grow warm to be thus trifled with :
Think better, Cromwell—I have given my promise
That Charles shall live.

Crom. A promise may be broke ;
Nay, start not at it—'T is an hourly practice ;
The trader breaks it—yet is counted honest ;
The courtier keeps it not—yet keeps his honour ;
Husband and wife in marriage promise much, 70
Yet follow sep'rate pleasures, and are—virtuous.
The churchmen promise too ; but wisely, they
To a long payment stretch the crafty bill,
And draw upon futurity :—a promise !
'T is the wise man's freedom, and the fool's restraint ;

“ It is the ship in which the knave embarks,
“ Who rigs it with the tackle of his conscience,
“ And sails with every wind : regard it not.”

Fair. Can Cromwell think so basely as he speaks ?

It is impossible : he does but try 80
How well fair speech becomes a vicious cause,
But, I hope, scorns it in the richest dress.
Yet hear me on ; it is our interest speaks,
And bids us spare his life ; while that continues,
No other title can annoy our cause,
And him we have secure : but grant him dead,
Another claim starts up, another king,
Out of our reach—This bloody deed perhaps
May rouse the princes of the continent
(Who think their persons struck at in this blow) 90
To shake the very safety of our cause.

Crom. When you consult our interest, speak with freedom ;
It is the turn and point of all design.
But take this answer, Fairfax, in return :
Britain, the queen of isles, our fair possession,
Secur'd by nature, laughs at foreign force ;
Her ships her bulwark, and the sea her dike,
Sees plenty in her lap, and braves the world.
Be therefore satisfy'd ; for Charles must die.

Fair. Wilt thou be heard, tho' at thy utmost need, 100
Who now art deaf to mercy and to pray'r ?
Oh, curs'd ambition, thou devouring bird,
How dost thou from the field of honesty
Pick ev'ry grain of profit and delight,
And mock the reaper, virtue ! Bloody man !
Know that I still have pow'r, have still the means
To make that certain which I stoop to ask ;

And fix myself against thy black design,
And tell thee, dauntless, that he shall not die.

Crom. Will Fairfax turn a rebel to the cause, 110
And shame his glories?

Fair. I abjure the name;
I know no rebel on the side of virtue.
This I am sure of, he that acts unjustly
Is the worst rebel to himself; and tho' now
Ambition's trumpet and the drum of power
May drown the sound, yet conscience will, one day,
Speak loudly to him, and repeat that name.

Crom. You talk as 't were a murder, not a justice.
Have we not brought him to an open trial? 120
Does not the general cry pronounce his death?
Come, Fairfax dares not——

Fair. By yon Heaven, I will——
I know thee resolute; but so is Fairfax.
You see my purpose, and shall find I dare. [Going.

Crom. Fairfax, yet stay. I would extend my power
To its full stretch, to satisfy your wish;
Yet would not have you think that I should grant
That to your threats, which I deny'd your pray'r——
Judge not so meanly of yourself and me. 130
Be calm, and hear me——What is human nature,
When the intemperate heat of passion blinds
The eye of reason, and commits her guidance
To headlong rashness? He directs her steps
Wide of success to error's pathless way,
And disappointments wild; yet such we are,
So frail our being, that our judgment reaches
Scarce farther than our sight——Let us retire,
And, in this great affair, entreat his aid

Who only can direct to certainty.

140

There is I know not what of good presage,
That dawns within, and lights to happy issue.

Fair. If Heaven and you consider it alike,
It must be happy.

Crom. An hour or two of pray'r
Will pull down favour upon Charles and us.

Fair. I am contented ; but am still resolv'd
That Charles shall live—I shall expect your answer
With the impatience of desiring lovers,
Who swell a moment's absence to an age.

[*Exit.*

Crom. This was a danger quite beyond my view,
Which only this expedient could prevent.
Fairfax is weak in judgment ; but so brave,
That, set determination by his side,
And he ascends the mountain top of peril.
Now time is gain'd to ward against his pow'r,
Which must be quickly thought on—To my wish—

151

Enter IRETON.

Ire. I but this instant met the general, Fairfax,
Who told me his entreaty had prevail'd
To save the life of Charles—'T is more than wonder—

160

Crom. Ireton, thy presence never was more timely.
I would disclose ; but now each moment's loss
Is more than the neglect of future years.
Hie thee in person to St. James's, Ireton,
And warn the officer, whose charge leads forth
The king to execution, to be sudden :
Let him be more than punctual to the time ;
If his respect to us forerun his warrant,
It shall win greatness for him ; so inform him—
That done, repair o' th' instant to the army,

170

And see a chosen party march directly,
 (Such as can well be trusted) post them, Ireton,
 Around the scaffold—My best kinsman, fly. [*Exit* Ireton.
 Why, now, I think I have secur'd my point;
 I set out in the current of the tide,
 And not one wind that blows around the compass,
 But drives me to success. Ambition, now,
 Soars to its darling height, and, eagle-like,
 Looks at the sun of pow'r, enjoys its blaze,
 And grows familiar with the brightness; now I see 180
 Dominion nigh; superiority
 Beckons and points me to the chair of state;
 There grandeur robes me. Now let Cromwell boast
 That he has reft the crown from Charles's brow,
 To make it blaze more awful on his own. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The King discovered on a Couch.

King. Kind sleep, farewell!
 Thou hast been loyal in the nightly care,
 And always smooth'd my pillow: at our parting,
 As to a faithful friend, I say, farewell,
 And thank thee for thy service. Here's another, 190

Enter Bishop Juxon.

Whose better care gives quiet to the mind;
 Who gives us the rich opiate of content,
 That makes us sleep in hope, and wake to mercy;
 Him, too, the bankrupt Charles can only pay
 As he has done the former; no return,
 But the poor gratitude of thanks, warm from the heart.

Say, my good lord, have you so soften'd rigour,
That I may see my children ere I die?

Juxon. It is permitted, sir; they wait without:
I would not let them enter, till I knew 200
You were prepar'd, and ready for the interview. [*Exit Juxon.*

King. Good Juxon, lead them hither. Now the father,
Spite of my firmness, steals into my eye,
And melts my manhood. Heart, thou hast no temper
Proof against nature, speaking in a child!

Enter Bishop JUXON, JAMES, GLO'STER, and ELIZABETH.

James. My royal father!

King. Good Juxon, make them rise;
For if I look that way I shall kneel too,
And join with them in tears. A chair, good Juxon.

[*Juxon brings a chair forward, and raises the children.*
Come hither, James; nay, do not weep, my boy; 210
Keep thy eyes bright to look on better times.

James. I will command my nature if I can,
And stop these tears of sorrow; for, indeed,
They drown my sight; and I would view thee well,
Copy my royal father in his death,
And be the son of his heroic virtues.

King. Thou art the child of duty; hear me, James,
And lay up this last lesson in thy heart:
When I am dead, look on thy brother Charles
Not as thy brother only, but thy king; 220
Pay him fraternal love and subject duty;
Nor let ambition, or the thirst to reign,
Poison thy firm allegiance. When thou seest him,
Bear him my blessing, and this last advice:
If Heaven restores him to his lawful crown,
Let him wreak no revenge upon his foes;

But think it his best conquest to forgive ;
 With kindness let him treat success, so shall she be
 A constant guest ; his promise, when once given,
 Let no advantage break ; nor any view
 Make him give up his honesty to reach it : 230
 Let him maintain his pow'r, but not increase it ;
 The string, prerogative, when strain'd too high,
 Cracks like the tortur'd chord of harmony,
 And spoils the concert between king and subject :
 " Let him regard his people more than ministers,
 " Whose interest or ambition may mislead him."
 These rules observ'd, may make him a good prince,
 And happier than his father——Wilt thou, James,
 Remember this ?

James. O, doubt not, royal sir ! 240
 Can what my father says escape my memory—
 And at a time when he shall speak no more ?

King. Come to my arms, my boy.

James. Would I could weep the blood that warms my heart !
 For water wrongs my sorrow.

King. My dear Elizabeth,
 Draw near, and take thy dying father's blessing.
 Say to thy mother (if thou e'er shalt see her),
 That my thoughts never wander'd from her ; that my heart
 Holds her as dear, even in this hour of death, 251
 As when my eyes first languish'd on her beauties ;
 Tell her, that Charles is only gone before
 T' inherit an immortal crown, and share it with her.
 Farewell, Elizabeth ! and let thy love
 And thy obedience wait thy brother Charles.

Eliz. Alas, my father, I but now have found
 A passage for my words, and yet you say,
 Farewell, already !

King. Come, my little Glo'ster,
Come to my arms, and let me kiss thy cheek. 260

Glo'ster. Alas, my lord, 't is cold and wet with tears !
I 'll wipe it dry, and warm it with my hand,
That it may meet your kindness as it ought.

King. Glo'ster, when I am dead, your brother Charles
Is then your king and master—Love and obey him.
These men who shall cut off thy father's head,
When I am dead, perhaps, may make thee king :
But do not thou, I charge thee, on my blessing,
Accept the crown while thy two brothers live ; 270
Consider, Glo'ster, they were born before thee,
And have an elder title—Wilt thou, Glo'ster ?

Glo'ster. A king ! No, they shall tear me first in pieces.

King. Oh, nature, nature, do not strike so deeply !
This scene is worse than death—I am ready, sir.
[Tomlinson at the door.

James. Oh, sir !

Eliz. My lord !

Glo'ster. My father !

King. Oh !

Glo'ster. I cannot part from you, my dearest father. 280
Would not those bloody men that cut your head off,
If I should beg it, cut off mine ?

King. Heart, thou art marble not to break at this—
Yet I must go ; for dire necessity
Has struggled long with my paternal fondness,
And has at length prevail'd. Farewell, at once.

[*Going, returns.*

I thought I had taken my last leave of them ;
But find that nature calls me back again,
And asks another look, another parting kiss. 289
Be virtuous and be happy. [Embrace.

Glo'ster. Oh, my poor father!— [They are led off.

King. So, now 'tis over—Let thy friendly aid,
Good Juxon, bear me company to death.—
Now, sir, lead on; ere long I hope to see
A world more glorious; where no discord lives,
Nor error rises, and no faction thrives:
There the unfetter'd mind perfection knows,
And looks with pity upon human woes. [Exeunt.

Enter Duke of RICHMOND, and Marquis of LINDSEY.

Rich. Oh, fatal day! now horror is on foot
In her worst garb, and stern calamity 300
Can do no more to England: Charles's sun
Sets in his blood, and blushes for his people.

Lind. What awful majesty his visage bears,
Nor deigns the tribute of one sorrowing look,
To grace misfortune!

Rich. Look where Fairfax comes;
His motion wild, and his distemper'd eye
Shoots fire around, and speaks some strange emotion.

Enter FAIRFAX.

Fair. Curs'd be the villain's arts, and every wile
That wrought me to believe him! Oh, credulity, 310
Thou hast as many ears as fame has tongues,
Open to every sound of truth and falsehood!
'T is now too late, impossible to save him:
Fool that I was, I knew him for a villain,
Yet trusted to him, to the monster Cromwell.

Rich. Fairfax, the world acquits thee of the deed;
Thy power has labour'd strongly for his safety:
Behold where Juxon, the good bishop, comes,
Return'd from his last service to his master.

Fair. I will not stay to hear the sad relation, 320
But think on my revenge on Cromwell;
May the mercy which he deny'd to Charles's mortal part
Ne'er light upon his soul, though at his last entreaty!

Enter Juxon.

Rich. Charles is at peace.

Juxon. He is, my gentle lord;
And may we all meet death with equal firmness!
Patience sat by him in an angel's garb,
And held out a full bowl of rich content,
Of which he largely quaff'd: then came Charity,
And in behalf of Charles, with hasty hand, 330
Dealt round forgiveness to the world: his pray'r
Was for his foes more earnest than himself,
Because their wants were greater. Thus fell Charles—
A monument of shame to the present age,
A warning to the future. His example
May prove this maxim's truth to all mankind:
The subject's reverence, and the prince's love,
Grasping and grasp'd, walk hand in hand together,
Strengthen'd by union: then the king's command
Is lost in the obedience of the subject: 340
The king, unask'd, confirms the people's rights,
And by the willing gift prevents the claim.
These are the virtues that endear a king,
Adorn a people, and true greatness bring. [Exeunt omnes.]

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.

*At length our bard has told his dismal story—
He thinks—without offence to Whig or Tory.
He writes not from a spirit of contention,
And only on third night expects—his pension.
Ladies, when civil dudgeon first grew high,
And the good folks fell out—they knew not why—
A stubborn race, no doubt on 't, were those Round-heads,
Rebels at once to female power, and crown'd heads :
But now, bless'd change! our heroes give their votes
For government of kings, and petticoats.
Had we then liv'd—what crowds of volunteers!
Down with the Rump, and hey for Cavaliers!
In those prim times, our grandmothers of yore
Preferr'd a prayer-book to a matadore:
At court, each turtle only lov'd her mate,
And no intrigues went on—but those of state.
What odious Salique law ('t was none of nature)
Excludes us women from the legislature?
Could we assemble once in convocation,
How purely would we settle all the nation!
Lovers and op'ras should employ our cares,
Cards, masquerades, and such-like state-affairs :
Debates, like a male senate, we could handle;
And move, as well as they, to—snuff a candle;
Our eyes and noses with one shrill voice declare;
And none be mutes—but all, all speakers there.*

*Now, on our stage, while Charles once more is try'd,
He hopes none here can prove a regicide;
A milder sentence to receive his trust is,
Tremendous pit, in your high court of justice:
If bravely you'd support the good old cause,
Atone your fathers' crimes by your applause;
Lay not a barb'rous tax on your good nature,
Nor raise in spleen the funds of wit, by satire.*

THE END.



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